University of Alberta

State-sponsored and Cultural Influences on English Language Teaching and Learning in Japanese Junior and Senior High Schools

by

Jolanta I. Rudzinska

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in

East Asian Studies (Japan)

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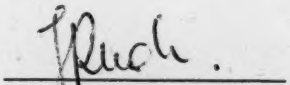

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January 6, 2003

Motto

No man is an island; neither is a teacher, nor a student.

We all live and act in a social environment that profoundly shapes our goals, expectations, motivations and values

(Hansen, Eugene Hal. English Education in Japanese Universities and Its Social Context. In *A Guide to Teaching English in Japan,* Charles B. Wordell, ed. Tokyo: The Japan Times, Ltd., pg.146, 1985)

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *State-sponsored and Cultural Influences on English Language Teaching and Learning in Japanese Junior and Senior High Schools* submitted by Jolanta I. Rudzinska in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in East Asian Studies (Japan).

Dr. Pamela Asquith, Supervisor

Dr. Olenka Bilash, Co-Supervisor

Dr. Janice Brown

Dr. Satoshi Ikeda

December 4, 2002

Dedicated to the most important

people in my life:

my husband, my son, my parents and my brother,

and to all my dear friends in Japan.

Abstract

This thesis presents State-sponsored (i.e., *Monbushō*) cultural and ideological factors that influence high school education and English instruction in Japan. It analyzes the effects of these factors on attempts by the Ministry of Education to implement reforms in the English language curriculum. State-sponsored factors include an account of the centralized way in which the Ministry has been administrating the educational system. Cultural and ideological factors take into account Confucianism, Japanese cultural sense of selfhood as well as *kokutai* and *nihonjinron* ideologies, all reflected in methods of teaching English and treatment of returnee children. Questionnaires administered to Japanese English teachers and students showed the presence and impact of these State-sponsored, cultural and ideological factors in English classrooms. Difficulties in implementing reforms in English curricula are perceived to be the result of *Monbushō* control over the educational system and cultural and ideological factors that contribute to the student-teacher relationship and methods used in the language classroom.

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I am indebted and very grateful to my professors, Dr. Pamela Asquith and Dr. Olenka Bilash for their constant assistance, encouragement and insight. They gave me not only the support of their wisdom but have supported me with their warmth and kindness throughout many complicated and unforeseen circumstances. They gave me strength to reach my goal and my dream in hard moments when my own persistence weakened. You are genuine teachers, who guide and encourage with care and understanding and I was very lucky to have you as my supervisors.

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Names of Japanese authors that appear in this thesis

are written in Japanese name order, with family name first,

except for Japanese who are living and working in Western countries

and who are better known in Western name order.

Chapter One

Introduction

Greeting of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology at the meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum[1]*, January 26th, 2000*

Thank you for gathering here today and finding time in your busy schedules to attend our meeting regarding the improvement of English language curriculum. The new millennium is an age of progressing globalization. Since English has become the language of international interaction, it is extremely important to develop communicative English skills in our children. Therefore, in the new curriculum guidelines for junior and senior high schools we emphasized the development of the basic, practical communication skills in English. Furthermore, the "period of integrated studies" initiated at the elementary school level should progressively be used for introducing English conversation. To successfully introduce the new curriculum, the existing English instruction must be carefully reconsidered. The appropriate, effective new English language curriculum should be created with our national character, geography, history and linguistic distinctiveness in mind. Also, the poor outcome of our present English education does not meet the significant amount of time we devote to studying English in high schools. This meeting will, therefore, discuss the improvements in the curriculum, which will contribute to the development of the communication skills in our students. During this meeting we would like to address important issues including: the recruitment of English language teachers, entrance examinations procedures to high schools and universities, and the use of the foreign Assistant Language Teachers. Furthermore, we will examine and assess plans to increase opportunities for students to speak and listen to everyday English language. The Ministry of Education, as an administrative organ, will work hard to put any proposals of reforms resulting from this meeting and leading to the development of the communication skills in our students into practice. Conclusions and any proposals resulting from our meeting should be put into practice no later that during the coming year. Our aspiration is to educate Japanese to have a good command of English before reaching adulthood.

---

[1] Translated by J. Rudzinska. For the original Japanese version, see Appendix I.

Background to the study

Between 1989 and 1996, I became very involved in working as an English teacher at Japanese schools in Sapporo. I worked at schools of various levels and also taught scores of adults and children at home during private lessons. As a foreigner neither born nor raised in Japan, but with a background of teaching English to Polish students in Warsaw schools, I had an opportunity to compare my teaching experiences in these two countries and to propose interesting hypotheses about why they were different. Foreign language education in Poland starts from elementary school, and the language classroom is oriented toward verbal communication with students actively participating in the language activities. In Japan, however, despite the wide range in age of my students, all appeared to share a similar reserved attitude toward me as a foreign language teacher and toward English. They showed a strong preference for content-oriented English classes with the aim to perfect grammatical accuracy and reading comprehension and persistently avoided participation in class. No matter how hard I tried to engage them in contributing more actively to the English contributions to the lesson, spontaneous answers and participation were extremely rare. I was expected to use Japanese language for instruction most of the time and my relationship with the students was very formal. The classes were teacher-centered and an overwhelming proportion of the class time was composed of teacher-talk and explanations. In such an environment the teacher-student interaction was extremely limited. Examination of these preferences and in-class behaviors as well as many after class talks with my

private and school students led me to believe that the Japanese have an ambivalent attitude toward the English language and foreigners. On the one hand they understand very well the importance of English and are anxious to obtain proficiency in spoken and written language, but at the same time, as I have experienced in Japan, there is a deep antipathy toward English built on the underlying belief that it is extremely hard for a Japanese person to attain communicative competence in English. This extreme difficulty in attaining communicative skills was most often explained to me by the Japanese themselves as the result of Japan's institutional framework for English education, as well as some aspects of their culture, tradition and history, which determine certain characteristics of Japanese communicative style.

Virtually all Japanese students going to private and public schools study general English throughout their six years of junior and senior high school education, yet Japanese English language teaching has a reputation of producing less than competent speakers of this language. This reputation has recently become an increasingly popular subject for discussions in Japanese newspapers, media and recently published books. An issue of the *Japan Echo* from October 1999 reported that in the August 1999 ranking of average TOEFL exam scores by country, Japan occupied the 180th position among 189 countries in the United Nations.[2]

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[2] Inoguchi, Takashi. Japan's Failing Grade in English. Insight and Analysis from Japanese Media. *Japan Echo*. October, vol. 26 no. 5: 6-17, 1999.

Furthermore, the Japanese Ministry of Education (*Monbukagakushō)*[3] in its recently published English language curriculum guidelines for junior and senior high schools and in the report from the meeting regarding improving English language curricula, also acknowledged the poor state of communicative competence of Japanese junior and senior high schools students and declared a course of changes that would lead to the development of those skills.[4]

Since the Meiji Restoration (1868), which marked a renewed fascination with Western culture and thought, following the opening of Japan in 1854, English has been the most important foreign language for the majority of Japanese. Today its position is stronger than ever. As a direct consequence of globalization there is a growing demand for an ability to communicate in English. The Ministry of Education entirely recognizes that in the age of diverse international relations and rapid technological changes Japan needs to be able to articulate its standpoint and thinking and that the inability to speak English is a principal handicap in this context. The Minister of Education, in his speech at the meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum, admitted the extreme importance

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[3] The mandate of *Monbukagakushō* includes Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology. For brevity, Ministry of Education or *Monbushō* will be used throughout the thesis.

[4] *Chūgakkō gakushū shidō yōryō. Kaisetsu-gaikokugo hen.* 中学校学習指導要領。解説—外国語編 (Course of Study for Junior High Schools. Explanation for Foreign Languages), 1999, pp. 7, 16.
Kōdō gakkō gakushū shidō yōryō kaisetsu . Gaikokugo hen, eigo hen. 高等学校学習指導要領解説。外国語編 英語編 (Course of Study for Senior High Schools. Explanation for Foreign Languages and English), 1999, pp. 176, 189.
Eigo shidō hōhō tōkaizen-no suishin-ni kan suru kondankai 英語指導方法等改善の推進に関する懇談会 (Ministry of Education meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum), January, 2001, pp. 2, 4.

for the Japanese to enter the new millennium acquiring practical communication skills in English language. He declared that the insufficient level of English language skills among Japanese students is not proportional to the amount of time spent on studying it and that existing English language instructional methods should be reconsidered in order to introduce new methods to increase communication ability (*Eigo shidō hōhō,* 2001: 31-2).

Since the establishment of the National Council for Educational Reform in 1984, the struggle to reform Japanese English education and to shift the emphasis from reading and grammar to the development of communicative skills has been high on the national agenda. During those two decades, the Ministry of Education repeatedly attempted to reform English language teaching methods, which seemed particularly resistant to change. The new English language curriculum guidelines effective from April 2002 are the latest product of this long process. Steps being considered within the newest guidelines involve the introduction of a "period of integrated studies" with English language activities starting from grade three at elementary schools; highlighting the importance of developing communicative abilities; increasing the number of English language classes at high schools; introducing new textbooks with more activities for developing communication skills; introducing training courses for teachers so that they become proficient in communicative language teaching; encouraging teachers to use more English for instruction and helping their students to develop communication skills; re-evaluating the role of assistant language teachers and integrating them better into

the system, and, lastly, revision of the entrance examination to schools and universities (ibid.: 1-5).

Growing up in Poland, I, like most of my peers, learned to speak many languages as a part of my public school education. In contrast, and to my surprise, I learned that few Japanese graduate from high school with any second language proficiency. This stark contrast in my experiences as an English teacher in Poland and in Japan drove me to search for an explanation for these differences. I hypothesized that possible explanations for the apparent resistance to changes in English language instruction that I witnessed while working in Japanese schools might lie in the historical and institutional construction of Japanese education, as well as in some aspects of Japanese culture that have remained conservatively in place, though under changing names, for many decades, continuing to shape and influence English language education. Consequently, I designed my Master's thesis as an attempt to understand the institutional, State-sponsored (i.e. *Monbushō*) framework of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Japan. Further, the research attempts to identify some of the cultural and ideological issues intrinsic to this State imposed framework and to investigate the influence of these issues on the currently practised English language instruction and implementation of communicative methods in public, mainstream junior and senior high schools. Put in other terms, my research questions are:

1) What historical and contemporary factors contributed to the institutional framework of the modern educational system in Japan, especially regarding English teaching and learning?

2) How does this framework influence current English language instruction and the ways in which *Monbushō* is attempting to reform it?

3) What are some of the cultural and ideological issues that influence the implementation of State-sponsored reforms in English language education?

4) What attitudes do Japanese teachers and students of English hold toward English language education, teachers' level of fluency in English, English language teaching and learning, ALTs' influence in English classrooms and English educational reforms?

Literature review

A review of literature on the issues and problems connected with English language instruction helped me to evaluate my experience and to examine findings disclosed by previous studies. Research in education (e.g., Hinenoya and Gatbonton, 2000; Kubota, 1998; Bingham, 1997; LoCastro, 1997, 1996; Koike & Tanaka, 1995; Ike, 1995; Edamatsu, 1978) and books by numerous authors, who have analyzed the historical account of changes in English language education (e.g., McConnell, 2000; Suzuki, 1999; Befu, 1983; Rohlen, 1983), pointed out deficiencies based on resistance to reforms and ultimate ineffectiveness of suggested reforms. The literature review helped me to draw a picture of major changes in Japanese education since the beginning of the Meiji Period (1868-1912) until now. Within this framework, I was able to present the history, current profile and most important reforms of English language instruction at Japanese junior and senior high schools. Moreover, an integral part of this study was composed of the translation and examination of the most recent Courses of Study for Junior High Schools and

Courses of Study for Senior High Schools issued by the Japanese Ministry of Education (*Chūgakkō gakushū,* 1999; *Kōdō gakkō gakushū,* 1999).

A considerable amount of research has also been done about various cultural and ideological aspects that influence Japanese behavior within and outside of the classroom. The "uniqueness" claimed for Japanese cultural traits have intrigued various authors for decades and have been discussed in a great number of diverse publications ranging from anthropological texts to journalistic articles. I investigated the literature for the transformation and influence on education of a long tradition of Confucian morality, (e.g., Okamoto, 2001; Wakabayashi, 1998; LoCastro, 1996; Koike & Tanaka, 1995; White, 1987; Hall, 1971; Tsunoda et al., 1958;) and for the impact of *kokutai* (国体, the fundamental character of the nation) ideology on the early development of the modern educational system in Japan (e.g., Kubota, 1998; Gluck, 1985; Befu, 1983). I examined the theories of cultural nationalism or *nihonjinron* (日本人論, discussions of the Japanese [Dale, 1986: Introduction, pg.1]) widely disseminated in Japanese society (e.g., Yoshino, 1992; Dale, 1986). This research was followed by a review of literature about the sense of self in Japanese culture (LoCastro, 1997; Hendry, 1995; Bachnik, 1992; Tobin, 1992) and Japanese perception of *kikokushijo* (帰国子女, returnee children), who have lived and attended school abroad for at least several months (Goodman, 1990). I also studied numerous texts, which have indicated that these cultural and ideological factors contribute to the formation of the so called "Japanese

communicative style", which strongly influences the student-teacher relationship and the way of teaching and learning English in Japanese public junior and senior high schools (Carroll, 2001; Hinenya & Gatbonton, 2000; Norris, 1996; Nishiyama, 1995; Clancy, 1990; Thompson, 1987).

As a result, in my thesis I focus on whether and how the institutional, cultural and ideological factors mentioned above from the teachers' and students' point of view influence English teaching and learning in the language classroom under the most recent attempts by the Ministry of Education to implement a new curriculum. Through my research I explore whether there is conflict between the ways in which these factors manifest themselves in the language classroom and the requirements of the communication-oriented English curriculum. My thesis, therefore, examines if these institutional, cultural and ideological barriers have been impeding and complicating the modernization of an English language curriculum, specifically with regard to the implementation of the communicative techniques at Japanese junior and senior high schools, and if so how.

Methods

To investigate my first research question about the institutional framework of Japanese English language education, I examined the literature regarding the history and structure of the Japanese education system as a whole, and the history of English language instruction in Japan. I also analyzed the account and subject matter of reforms in English language education. In order to get a fuller picture of the course of the Ministry of Education's efforts to implement communicative

methods within English language curricula, I looked at the changes implemented since the Meiji Period, through the postwar times and into the most recent plans for changes in English language curricula that were to be implemented from April 2002. Furthermore, utilizing primary sources that include the official Ministry of Education guidelines for teaching English in junior and senior high schools, I examined the present guiding principles for English language education. For the answers to my second research question about the cultural and ideological framework of English language education, I turned to the literature regarding Japanese society, traditions, thought and beliefs.

In the third part of my research I looked at what attitudes toward English language education, level of fluency in English, experiences with English language learning and views about English education reforms were generated in Japanese teachers and students by the identified institutional, cultural and ideological factors in education. To explore the relationship between these factors and the ideas, perceptions and attitudes of teachers and students I utilized questionnaires with questions divided into five parts, each part composed correspondingly of questions about: 1) personal/professional information, 2) attitude toward English language education, 3) linguistics[5] aspects, 4) experience in English learning and 5) present state of English education and educational reforms. I prepared two separate

[5] These questions, although grouped under "linguistic questions" in the survey, are not about the structure or history or processing of language but about problems connected with learning English and assessing the individual English language ability.

questionnaires. One questionnaire was designed for Japanese English language teachers, who experienced the English language educational system in Japan from perspectives both as students in an English-language classroom and as English language teachers. The teachers who responded to my questionnaire were taking courses in second language teaching at the University of Alberta under the program of the Japan Ministry of Education (MEXT)-University of Alberta the six-month Intensive Teacher Training Program and Hokkaido-Teachers of English Program (HTEP) (for the detailed description of these programs see Chapter Two). The second questionnaire, addressing the same issues from the students' perspective, was administered to Japanese students also studying at the University of Alberta.

Organization of the thesis

The organization of the thesis is divided into five main chapters. Following this introduction, chapter two examines the institutional framework, namely, the short history of the formation of the modern Japanese educational system and its overall organization, with a special focus on junior and senior high schools. Under that rubric, the chapter relates the history of English language instruction in Japan and provides an account and content of reforms that have been carried out within the English language program since the Meiji Period.

Chapter three explores the cultural and ideological framework of Japanese English education. It identifies cultural and ideological issues that may have been influencing English language education and its reforms and that have been manifested in the classroom contributing to the formation of the so-called

"Japanese communicative style". It analyzes whether and how the identified cultural and ideological factors influence English teaching and learning in the language classroom from the teacher and student point of view.

Chapter four is dedicated to the analysis of the pilot surveys[6] that I conducted in the Fall of 2001 and Spring of 2002. It examines and evaluates the results of the questionnaires answered by 13 Japanese English language teachers and 13 Japanese students taking courses at the University of Alberta.

Chapter five provides overall considerations and recommendations regarding the present state of English language education in Japan. I conclude with a number of points including the statements that: 1) underlying institutional, cultural and ideological frameworks of English language teaching and learning are the source of difficulties in a cross-cultural exportation of communicative language teaching methods, and 2) the newest Courses of Study issued by the Ministry of Education that emphasize developing communicative competence should take into consideration the individual and distinctive Japanese institutional, sociocultural, ideological and historical features.

I am aware that other aspects, such as structural and linguistic differences between Japanese and English language, very likely also contribute to how successfully the new curriculum is implemented and how successfully Japanese

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[6] For the Questionnaire for the Japanese teachers see Appendix C, and for the detailed results of this questionnaire see Appendix D. For the Questionnaire for the Japanese students see Appendix E, and for the detailed results of this questionnaire see Appendix F.

students achieve communicative competence. Hence, in my thesis I do not try to imply that only institutional, cultural and ideological factors influence Japanese fluency in English language and the implementation of the new curriculum. Nonetheless, this is a thesis about the culture of English language teaching and learning. Although linguistic aspects are mentioned in my argument, an analysis of these is beyond the scope of the thesis. This study is intended as an exploratory study that aims to raise awareness about the institutional as well as the non-legislated, culture-based factors that may affect the existing English educational system and implementation of the curriculum reforms in Japan.

In conclusion, to the extent that the present educational system reflects the history and general patterns of attitudes and behaviors in Japanese society, it is critical to recognize and reanalyze the influence of the institutional and cultural values cited above. I believe that they are the hidden factors contributing to the rigid conventionality, strict standards of discipline, teacher-centeredness and lack of student participation in the language classroom. I hope that my thesis will aid in formulating what can be done to improve the effectiveness of teaching the English language in Japan and also in understanding the English teaching and learning environment in a Japanese classroom, unfamiliarity with which puts a foreign English teacher at a serious disadvantage.

Chapter Two

History and Institutional Framework of Japan's Modern School System

The contemporary system of modern schooling in Japan bears the heritage of its more than 130 year history of national policies, institutions and cultural makeup. This chapter is an attempt to contextualize my research by illustrating the history of the formation and present organization of the modern Japanese junior and senior high school system. I describe historical and contemporary factors that contributed to the institutional framework of modern high school education in Japan and English instruction within this establishment. This chapter also reveals the ways in which this framework influences English language education and attempts by the Ministry of Education to reform it.

Education before World War II

Between 1603 and 1867, for fifteen generations and 250 years, Tokugawa shoguns kept the country closed to outside influence in almost complete isolation.[7] Education during the Tokugawa era evolved into a network of private and government schools, which were able to provide instruction for quite a wide social spectrum. Isolation from the outside world, Confucianism, and strict moral teachings were, however, the point of departure in every kind of school during that period. The paternalistic interpretation of Confucian ideas perfectly suited the

[7] I recognize the fact of interaction with China and to a lesser extent with the West during this time, but for the average school, this was hardly apparent until the Meiji Restoration.

newly formed Tokugawa government by motivating the rigorous observance of the law and also by explaining very well the social division into classes. The end of the Tokugawa era in Japan's history was the beginning of the gradual opening of the country and minor trend of interest in Western studies and English language. That interest was, however, very selective and careful, and for the most part did not influence the moral and ethical structure of Japanese society. Japan entered the next, new era of Meiji with the educational system profoundly shaped by Confucian ethics, with a considerable sense of inferiority to foreign culture and with the certainty that the educational process is an instrument for influencing political and social relationships rather than development of the individual (Hall, 1971: 219; Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 56-7).

The Meiji Period (1868-1912) marked the beginning of the Japanese modern educational system as well as the full-fledged opening of Japan and the overpowering fascination with Western culture, thought, creativity and foreign languages. The early Meiji educational system replaced the traditional Confucian-based program with a more practical, utilitarian attitude, which stressed the learning process as a tool for obtaining success in the modern world (Wakabayashi, 1998: 105; Tubielewicz, 1996: 64). The Meiji government recognized the fundamental role that education played in the transformation of a feudal society into a modern industrial civilization. For the first time in Japanese history, schooling became open to every child regardless of his/her background. Individual success in life and enlightenment became the focal goals for studying (Okano &

Tsuchiya, 1999: 14-5). On April 6, 1868 the Emperor Meiji took the "Imperial Oath of Five Articles", which determined basic principles by which the country was to be ruled. Article Five stated: "Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world, so that the welfare of the Empire may be promoted" (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 78). It became necessary to introduce Western knowledge, send students abroad and bring foreign teachers to Japan. Initially, Dutch was considered vital for access to foreign knowledge but within a very short time English replaced it. To pave the way for the establishment of a unified, modern system of education, all powers relating to schooling were transferred in January 1871 to the newly formed Ministry of Education. Existing schools, which were previously controlled by the local governments of the feudal districts, were converted to the complete control of the newly formed Ministry. From now on this Ministry was in charge of the "general management of all educational matters, whether connected with upper, middle or lower schools" (Hall, 1971: 221; Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 83).

The second major step toward centralization of Meiji education was the establishment of the Educational Code in 1872. It regulated details of the modern educational structure, its finance, and management. Japanese politicians in the Meiji government wanted to unify and impose an educational system from above as an act of national policy. Since the strong centralization and control of the French educational system strongly appealed to them, the Japanese Educational Code was an almost exact copy of it. According to the Code, compulsory elementary school

education was to be eight years in length, divided into two cycles of four years each. High school education was six years, divided into two equal cycles of three years each. Curricula for both levels of schools were to be centrally planned and regulated by the Ministry of Education and special federal inspectors were to control their execution (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 15; Hall, 1971: 222-3). Furthermore, under the central control of the Ministry the country was divided into eight university districts, each consisting of thirty-two middle school districts. Each middle school district was again divided into two hundred and ten elementary school districts. Following the Ministry's new policy, at one time 53,760 new elementary schools were established. With this act, Meiji schooling was opened to almost every child in the country regardless of place of residence or social class. The new, centralized educational system aspired to create a national identity and a shared sense of nationhood among people, who until now had lived in feudal districts and were connected mostly with their respective feudal lords (Okano and Tsuchiya, 1999: 14-5; Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 84).

The foreign approach towards knowledge and foreign influence upon the traditional culture of Japan, however, began gradually to create perplexity and ideological confusion. In 1881, a new compulsory subject, ethics, was introduced to the schools' curricula. Its content emphasized *sonnō-aikoku* (尊皇愛国, reverence for the country), cult of the Emperor, and the history of Japan. A new movement of traditionalists was beginning to emerge. They guarded traditional Japanese values and were disappointed by the disappearance of a clear moral code

in education; consequently, they propagated the return to Confucian values (Tubielewicz, 1996: 65; Wakabayashi, 1998: 106-7). The issue of *Kyōiku Chokugo* (教育勅語, The Imperial Rescript on Education) in 1890 marked the end of the Enlightenment Era in teaching. As an outcome of the compromise between leaders of the Enlightenment and the conservatists it remained the fundamental proclamation of ethical values for the entire nation until 1945. The *Rescript* highlighted the importance of loyalty towards the country, sacrifice for the Emperor, and Confucian values in social relationships. It cleared the way for national education based on national morality centered on the cult of the Emperor and it limited significantly the democratization of the Japanese educational system. The enthusiasm of the early Meiji period for catching up with Western ideas and models of education faded quickly. By the end of the 1880s the education policy had swung radically back towards a traditional system based on Confucian values (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 18-9; Wakabayashi, 1998: 109).

The Taishō era (1912-1926) brought further strengthening of the centralized control of the Ministry of Education over the curricula, textbooks, administration, personnel and finances of the Japanese educational system. The content of the textbooks became increasingly chauvinistic and nationalistic and strongly propagated patriotic values. The promotion of nationalistic and moral values and the re-Japanization of education became an important task (Hall, 1971: 228-36). The *Rinji Kyōiku Kaigi* (臨時教育会議, The Extraordinary Education Committee),

established in 1917, was in charge of establishing measures that would help in using education more effectively for the government's political agenda. Moral education at elementary schools was strengthened and military preparation conducted by army officers was introduced at the middle school level. Despite moderate opposition from the *Shin Kyōiku* (新教育, New Education) movement propagating Western liberal educational theories and practices, the Japanese government managed to establish and further consolidate militaristic and ultranationalistic ideology in education (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 19-27).

Education in the 1930s was closely connected to the national mobilization strategy for the war. The Imperial ideology, strengthened during the turn of the century, further secured its place in the curricula throughout every level of school. Foreign language lessons were almost completely eliminated for the benefit of intensive moral education. Political indoctrination of Japanese schools reached its peak in March 1937 when the Bureau of Thought set up within the Ministry of Education issued *Kokutai-no Hongi* (国体の本義, The Principles of the National Polity). This document shared and renewed the ideology presented in the Imperial Rescript on Education from 1890 and was a manual of patriotic education containing official state teachings on almost every aspect of domestic policy. By the end of 1941 the Ministry of Education planned to introduce the National School Reform, one of its most far-reaching efforts at school reorganization. The reform was a full-blown revolt against Western culture, foreign thought and any signs of

individualism. Although its full introduction was interrupted by the war, a centrally controlled curriculum had already become a political means to mobilize people for military expansion. Military training became compulsory for every student from elementary school to university (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 25; White, 1987: 61-2; Gluck, 1985: 283; Hall, 1971: 247-8).

From the beginning of the Meiji period until World War II Japanese education experienced a diverse set of foreign and domestic influences. During the first two decades of the opening of the country and an uneasy process of liberal changes in the education system, the Japanese presented a remarkable eclecticism in borrowing ideas from Western countries. This early catch-up period of reforms and selective borrowing of Western achievements was clearly focused on remodeling Japanese education so that it could be useful in the process of building a new modern Japanese nation, national strength and ultimately military and defensive power.

Education after World War II

Postwar schooling started amidst total social chaos after the war. At the end of 1945, following directions of the General Headquarters of the Occupation forces, the nationalistic and militaristic principles were removed from school curricula and textbooks. The new Constitution, enacted in 1946, defined the basic right of all people to receive nine years of compulsory education free of charge. In the same year, following the request of General Headquarters, the United States sent a 27-member Education Mission to Japan to advise on the rebuilding and modernization

of the educational system (Katsuta & Nakauchi, 1999: 31; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 30). The Imperial Rescript on Education, which had been the foundation for Japanese educational policy for more than fifty years, was officially cancelled at a National Diet session (Katsuta & Nakauchi, 1999: 31). It was replaced by *Kyōiku Kihonhō* (教育基本法, The Fundamental Law of Education) issued in March 1947, which followed the recommendation of the American Education Mission and marked a turning point in Japanese educational history. The main goals of the new Fundamental Law of Education were: 1) the decentralization of the administration of the educational system through transferring a large portion of the authority of the Ministry of Education to local boards of education elected by local residents; 2) introduction of a democratic, egalitarian, co-educational system of schooling; 3) change of the pre-war system of schools into the American format of 6-3-3-4 (6 years of elementary school, 3 years of junior high, 3 years of senior high school and 4 years of university); 4) respect for individual dignity, different religions and races (religion and ethics classes were removed from the school curricula and replaced with social studies), and 5) assurance of freedom within the school curriculum and for teachers (meaning that curricula should not be controlled by the government as before and the teachers should have the freedom to arrange the program to suit the realities of the local community and its children. They would also gain rights to form teachers' unions and take part in political activities) (ibid.: 32). The new Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education were intended

to facilitate a total reorientation of the pre-war educational system and to serve as a key to social reconstruction after Japan's defeat in World War II.

It seems, however, that the Japanese side did not intend these post-war reforms to cause drastic alteration to the basic ideas of the educational system. However ideal and beneficial the reforms might have been they were perceived as imposed by the American authorities and soon became a subject of many revisions and reverse reforms (Aso & Amano, 1983: 72-73). A mere ten years after the end of the war, in 1955, many of the changes, especially those concerning decentralization and attenuation of the Ministry of Education's control, were reversed. Regional boards of education, which were to be elected locally, became a subject of political appointment and the Ministry of Education once more gradually tightened its control over the textbooks and the curriculum. The new Course of Study put into practice in 1955 was authoritarian in nature and the new social studies curriculum was modified to stress again the status of the Emperor. In 1958 The Ministry of Education sent directives to all local authorities to reinstate the course on moral education. It was to be taught as a separate subject but also integrated into all other subjects and various extracurricular activities (McConnell, 2000: 13; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 39; Luhmer, 1990: 174).

A new era of rapid economic growth, which began in the 1960s, helped to further strengthen the central control over education in Japan. The economic potential and rapid growth of the Japanese industry became the main driving forces behind the changes in the educational system. The highly democratized and

decentralized system of schooling could not respond effectively to government economic plans. The focus and intent of the centralized educational policy was to a produce highly qualified, well-organized and competent elite. Responding to the intensive pressure of the Economic Council, the Central Education Council announced that the economy and development of human resources was to become a first priority of the policymakers. In order to produce skilled technicians, the high school system was diversified and the five-year, public technical colleges were established. The government also subsidized the intensive development of science and engineering programs at the university level in order to meet the demands of the rapid growth of heavy industry. The renewed centralization and interference of the Ministry of Education on every level of the educational structure reached its peak when in 1966 the Central Education Council issued a document entitled "The Image of the Ideal Japanese Person". Among the most important characteristics of the ideal Japanese person were loyalty, patriotism and respect for tradition and the Emperor (McDonnell, 2000: 13-4; Katsuta & Nakauchi, 1999: 33; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 39-40).

Thus, immediately after the war and a short period of democratic changes, the Japanese didactic policy swung back again towards strong centralization, promotion of moral education and traditional ethical values. It became clear that Japanese schools were not perceived as a tool for implementing democracy, but rather, as a means to produce disciplined workers who could perform reliably in a rigorous, hierarchical social environment. If we position the changes in the

educational system after 1945 on a continuum, at the beginning there is the most intensive period of post-war reforms, which gave rise to democratized education with expanded opportunities and re-organization of structure based on the American schooling pattern. Along the continuum, however, there is a chain of reverse reforms compromising post-war democracy. These reforms considerably limited the decentralization and democratization introduced by the Americans and changed Japanese education into a consistent, uniform system espousing strong moral and ethical principles. This system took on the role of continuing Japanese tradition and culture, and carried it almost unchanged to the present day.

Japanese high school education today

The current modern educational system in Japan is the product of two significant transformation junctures. One was the initial introduction of modern schooling by the Meiji government accompanied by the early fascination and transmission of a variety of Western educational models and ideas. The second was the radical reform of the educational system introduced under the command of the Allied Occupation authorities, which was intended to eliminate nationalist elements and create a democratic school system with emphasis on individual development. The reminder of this chapter provides a description of the current educational system for public junior and senior high schools in Japan.

Calendar and curriculum of mainstream public junior and senior high schools

Japanese students follow a strict dress code and attend school for a total of 40 weeks a year. The school year begins on April 1 and ends on March 31 of the

following year (which corresponds to the fiscal year). There are three terms in the course of the junior high school year: April - July, September - December and January - March. Senior high schools adopt either two or three terms for their school year. There are six weeks of summer vacation, two weeks at New Year and two weeks at the end of the school year in March. Public and informal school holidays constitute about two additional weeks of free time (White, 1987: 66; Rohlen, 1983: 159). The Ministry of Education provides the basic framework and national standards for the curricula for all school levels to secure the optimum, unified level of education throughout the country. The Course of Study is prepared and issued by the Ministry based on the recommendations made by the Curriculum Council, which is an advisory body to the Minister of Education. It defines and specifies the content of each school subject taught at every level of school. Each school is expected to organize and coordinate its own curriculum based on the Course of Study and the School Education Law. The local school curriculum is supposed to take into account actual characteristics of each school and each community, its needs and the developmental level of the students. However, because the curriculum is based on national standards, most of the public junior and senior high schools organize it in a similar way (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 1994: 4). This leads to a great uniformity of the curricula all over the country. An average number of hours of instruction is 30 hours a week at the junior high school level and 34 hours a week at the senior high school level. A foreign language is an elective subject in public junior high school,

but English is chosen overwhelmingly by nearly everyone. In public senior high schools, nine to ten hours a week are dedicated to elective subjects such as music or art, health, club activities, physical education, and home economics. The balance of the instructional hours is devoted to subjects like Japanese language, English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Public junior and senior high schools offer four to five hours of English instruction per week. This schedule means that every student in public junior and senior high school has a full six years of instruction in four main subjects and English (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 60; Kitao et al., 1995, electronic document; Rohlen, 1983: 156).

Junior high schools as a transitional step to academic studies

The majority of students in Japan (94%) attend public junior high schools. A small group of children (about 6 %) chooses private education, which further channels them into the private senior high schools. Junior high school (grades 7 to 9, ages 12 to 14) concludes the compulsory education (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 56). It represents a very important step between the encouraging and caring primary school environment and the organized academic studies in senior high school. It also prepares students for the entrance examination for senior high schools, which is a decisive point in their learning careers.

Entrance examinations to the hierarchically ranked senior high schools play a crucial role in stratifying Japanese students. Thus, schools channel students into different ability groups and subsequently into different careers in the society (Tsukada, 1991: 1, 2). Junior high school teachers usually meticulously follow the

curriculum and textbooks since the amount of material that has to be covered for the entrance examinations allow for little digression. Moreover, at the junior high school level, the relationship between students from different grades becomes more hierarchical. This hierarchy is further supported during various committee and club activities (e.g., health, sports clubs) where students learn how to behave and work in a structured and hierarchically planned collective. Organized and disciplined junior high school programs, therefore, are an important step in building students' understanding of the social environment of senior high school (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 62).

Differentiation by senior high schools

Over 96 percent of junior high school students continue on to senior high schools. As has already been mentioned, the transition between these two schools is the most important determining point for a student's future career and life opportunities. Each school district has a detailed hierarchy of senior high schools based on aspirations and aims that those schools have in preparing students for their post-school destination and also based on the difficulty in gaining admission. Success in becoming a senior high school student is a combination of many factors. Grades from junior high school as well as the prefectural aptitude test, teachers' recommendation and the conventional entrance examination are all equally taken into consideration (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 63; Rohlen, 1983: 121-8). Senior high schools can be divided into 6 categories: 1) elite academic high school,

2) non-elite academic high schools, 3) vocational, 4) evening, 5) correspondence, and 6) schools for the handicapped. The first category of schools, the prefectural elite academic high schools, accepts the best students in terms of academic excellence and sends the greater part of them to the top Japanese universities. This thesis focuses only on the second category, non-elite public academic high schools, since they represent the majority of academic high schools and attract the largest part of the total senior high school population. Despite sharing the same objective of preparing students for higher education and entrance examinations, non-elite academic high schools differ substantially in level and performance. Some of them focus on preparing their students to enter four-year university programs, while others aim at preparations for two-year colleges. An example of this variability can be seen in the 1997 statistics published by the Hyōgo Prefecture High School Head Guidance Teachers' Association. The statistics describe 51 mainstream, non-elite academic senior high schools in Kobe city and their students' post-high school destinations.

Number of schools (out of 51 examined non-academic senior high schools in Kobe)	**Percent of students from these schools entering four-year university programs**
7 schools	Over **70%** of students
16 schools	**50-70%** of students
8 schools	**30-50%** of students
20 schools	Under **30%** of students

Table 1: Statistics of the post-secondary destinations of graduates from 51 non-elite senior high schools in Kobe (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 67).

These data show the diversity within the non-elite academic high schools in terms of their students' post-secondary destinations. Despite the common label, only a portion of students graduating from non-elite academic high schools pass the entrance examination and go on to the full four-year university programs (as many as 20 schools out of the surveyed group of 51, send less than 30% of their students to the four-year university program). Of the remaining student population within the surveyed group of schools, the proportion entering two-year junior colleges varies between 3 and 26 percent and that entering specialist schools between 14 and 33 percent (ibid.: 69-70).

Juku and *yobiko*

Since the earliest years of elementary education extracurricular activities have been a very common component of the school day of Japanese children. The Ministry of Education statistics from 1993 showed that approximately 23.6 percent of primary school students and 59.5 percent of junior high school students attended *juku* (塾, cram school) which provide extra help in academic subjects in an after-school setting (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 60). Eighty six percent of students from urban areas reported using its help with academic subjects at some point in their school careers. Only elementary, junior and senior high school students attend *juku* (White, 1987: 77).

Juku form quite a diverse group of private cram schools offering supplementary education. They can range from small classes of several students that meet at the teacher's house, through middle size classes with tens of students

run by former teachers, to full-size schools enrolling thousands of students and belonging to franchise chains, owned by large companies and having branches all over the country (McConnell, 2000: 23; Rohlen, 1983: 104). The objectives of cram schools may also vary. They offer courses that are in step with the school program as well as some that present material ahead of the school curriculum. Many of the *juku* courses concentrate only on the material that is more likely to appear on the entrance examinations to high schools and universities. Consequently, the reason for attending *juku* may vary from raising a grade in a particular academic subject to preparing strictly for the entrance examination of an institution at a higher level. Top Japanese *juku* have entrance examinations themselves and are perceived by many as a crucial factor in succeeding on the road to prestigious senior high schools or universities. Each *juku* tries to attract customers by developing distinctive teaching methods, making their programs more effective, using elaborate teaching techniques and hiring foreign native speakers to teach English. To attract new students *juku* advertise the number of their clients who successfully entered top universities in the country. Although Japanese education officials often criticize cram schools and disapprove of the excessive stress placed on the entrance examinations, *juku* continue to flourish since education remains the most crucial determinant of social stratification. Thus, cram schools have become a significant large-scale addition to the formal educational system. They are a natural response to the pressure created by a system

of competition based on the entrance examination to senior high schools, colleges and universities (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 60, 100; Rohlen, 1983: 106-7).

Yobiko (よびこ, full-time cram school) is considered to be an advanced equivalent of *juku*. As a supplementary educational institution, *yobiko* allows high school graduates who failed the entrance examinations to study for an extra year. Those unfortunate students are called *rōnin* (浪人, a student who failed entrance examination and is studying to take it again). The name *rōnin* originated during the Tokugawa period in Japanese history (1603-1867), when it was used to refer to a *samurai* without a master. *Rōnin* students belong neither to a high school nor to a university. They wish to try to enter a university again the following year and must prepare themselves either independently or by enrolling in *yobiko* classes. A *rōnin*'s view of his or her year in the *yobiko* is usually as a period of suffering, but also a stepping-stone to reach the dream of studying in a chosen university (Tsukada, 1991: p 38).

There are three types of *yobiko*: 1) small schools, which have about 500 students (67.6 percent of all *yobiko* in Japan), 2) large-scale schools with at least 10,000 students, and 3) the *yobiko* that specialize in preparing students for the medical school entrance exams (ibid.: p 13). The *yobiko* has developed into a very significant institution for the transition from high school to university and college. It supplies the ranking of all tertiary educational institutions and provides students with textbooks that contain previously asked questions in each subject of the

university entrance exams. It also offers mock examinations five times per year. The scores from these are then standardized and help the students to evaluate their academic ability and predict the chances of entering a chosen university (ibid.: p 15). The curriculum of the typical *yobiko* covers and focuses only on the subjects relevant for the university and college entrance examinations. At the *yobiko* the teachers also help students with test problem solving strategies by practising how to effectively answer the questions on the test in the limited time.

A brief history of English language education in Japan

The beginning

For most of the Tokugawa period contact with Westerners and Western languages was limited to the small island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor, where the Dutch held their trading colony. The relationship and exchange with foreigners was restricted to only a small number of Japanese, who were able to communicate in Dutch, acted as interpreters for the government, conducted trade mediations, and oversaw the Dutch settlement in Dejima. Following a brief stop at Nagasaki of a British ship in 1808 and a complete fiasco in attempting to communicate with the sailors, the Tokugawa government ordered state interpreters to add English to their study of Dutch, French and Russian (Tubielewicz, 1984: 286). In 1853, Commodore M.C. Perry arrived at Uraga, Tokyo Bay, with a letter from the President of the United States demanding the official induction of a trade relationship between America and Japan. The official opening of Japan began after that as a direct consequence of the American trade demand and progressed gradually until the beginning of the

Meiji period (1868-1912). The opening was followed by the arrival of many delegates, trade representatives, and Christian missionaries. By 1864 there were 87 American Christian missionaries in Japan. It was acknowledged in a short time that the Dutch language was not of fundamental significance, but that more useful contacts could be made through English. English became recognized for its prestige in the political, legal and commercial arenas (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 200-8). From the beginning, mostly due to the arrival of the many American Christian missionaries, American English and not British English became the standard language taught in Japan. One of the first English schools, the Yokohama Academy, was founded as early as 1865. In December 1874, 82 of 91 existing Foreign Language Schools in Japan, which taught Chinese, Dutch, German and French, were reconstituted as English schools (Ike, 1995: 5).

Establishment of English language education

The appreciation of the importance that English played in the modernized and economically advanced world reached its zenith when in 1885 Mori Arinori became a Minister of Education. His views were radical and drastic and often did not meet with popular favor but can serve as an example of the trends that existed in Japan at that time. He went as far as to propose a complete abandonment of Japanese and the adoption of English as a national language (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 92).

> The commercial power of English speaking race [*sic*], which now rules the world drives our people into some knowledge of their commercial ways and habits. The absolute necessity to master

> English language is thus forced upon us. It is a requisite of the maintenance of our independence in the community of nations. Under the circumstances, our meager language can never be of any use outside of our islands, especially when the power of steam and electricity shall have pervaded the land. Our intelligent race, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, cannot depend upon a weak and uncertain medium of communication in its endeavor to grasp the principal truths from the precious treasury of Western science and art and religion (ibid.: 93).

In the new curriculum guidelines published by the Ministry of Education in 1881 English was given quite a significant status. English language education became a focus of discussion and debate in Japan. It became a basic requirement for a general education and a prerequisite for higher education. Furthermore, of a total of 26-28 classes per week, middle school students were supposed to have 6 to 7 compulsory English classes (Ike, 1995: 5). By the 1890s the system of English language teaching had already been established. It was compulsory in middle and higher secondary schools and became the main foreign language taught in Japan. At that time, most of the textbooks were brought in from the United States and numerous native speakers served as teachers to Japanese students. There were scientific experts and technical advisors brought to Japan to instruct in specialized branches of foreign knowledge and who conducted their instruction in English. There were also English and Americans who came to Japan individually to teach English language, a large group of Christian missionaries teaching English, and a group of Japanese who had spent time abroad studying English, Western culture and civilization (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 201-8). This mixture of English teachers and the undeniable enthusiasm for learning on the side of Japanese

students led to the wide propagation of English and produced many students who developed a good command of the language. This enthusiasm of Japanese students who experienced the opening of the country during the Meiji period cannot be underestimated. They shared a sincere passion and conviction that they had a lot to learn from the West, and learning English was an important aspect of that.

During the next ten years, however, foreign texts and teachers were gradually replaced by Japanese ones. Technically competent Japanese instructors became able to take over the teaching from the foreign instructors (Ota, 1997; Kitao et al., 1995, electronic document). According to Ota (1997), this replacement of foreign professors and textbooks, though inevitable, significantly lowered the level of English competence of Japanese students. Together with the withdrawal of the influence of foreign instructors on the teaching of English and the decreasing enthusiasm of students, the study of English became more regulated and systematized. That is, it was learned mostly for the purpose of reading written texts, with strong emphasis on grammar and language rules. The first attempt to change these methods of teaching and introduce communicative activities occurred in 1922 when Harold Palmer, an English linguist and a specialist in language teaching, was invited to Japan as an advisor to the Ministry of Education. He founded the Institute for Research in English Teaching in Tokyo and enthusiastically advocated learning English through aural-oral methods. Traditional grammar-translation methods, however, proved hard to change and turned out to be too deeply rooted to be replaced by the new approach.

Furthermore, Palmer's methods required a command of English that exceeded that of most Japanese English teachers. Although his methods and reform proposals caused some re-examination of teaching methods, they were never implemented generally. In the 1920s the rise of nationalism in Japan set off anti-American and anti-English language attitudes. Shortly before and during World War II, English was seen as an "enemy language" and its study was so discouraged that many universities abolished their English language departments. High schools, however, continued English language education from the officially revised textbooks, approved by the Ministry of Education (Ike, 1995: 5-8).

Debate over English language education during the post-war period

With the end of World War II the significance of learning English became widely acknowledged in Japan. In 1952 the first group of Japanese students and teachers, under received the Fulbright scholarship program, left for the United States to participate in what became an annual exchange program aimed at enhancing methods in English language education in Japan. The same scholarship also sponsored American specialists who came to Japan and tried to help with the introduction of oral methods in teaching and learning and the formation of the Language Laboratory Association of Japan. Since 1950 there were also numerous attempts to reanalyze and reintroduce Palmer's aural-oral methods of teaching. In 1960 Tsuda Juku University installed Japan's first language laboratory and the Ministry of Education appointed a committee for reviewing the state of English education in Japan. The committee concluded that the junior and senior high

school English teachers should be trained in developing aural-oral ability, considered crucial for the improvement and well-being of Japanese English education. However, although there had been wide interest and some enthusiasm for aural-oral approaches to teaching English, the written form of the university, college and high school entrance examination supported the continued existence and development of the traditional grammar-translation methods (Ike, 1995: 6-9).

In the 1970s the debate over the future of English language education in Japan centered around two opposing viewpoints. One called for abolishing English as a compulsory subject in junior and senior high schools because of lack of motivation on the part of students who do not have any opportunity to use the language in Japan. Furthermore, it was argued that the insufficient and unsuccessful methods of teaching English do not take into consideration deep-seated linguistic differences between English and Japanese languages. This viewpoint also maintained that the demanding entrance examination system remains the single motivation for pursuing English knowledge. Proponents of the opposing view argued that learning English is essential for the development of the learner's mind, his/her horizons and awareness of the learner's own mother tongue and culture. Therefore, English language should be given a permanent position as a compulsory subject in junior and senior high school curricula (ibid.: 6-9).

English instruction in today's high school curricula

English language instruction is offered in all junior and senior high schools in Japan. The following is a brief summary of the English language curriculum for

junior and senior high school, formation of which is based on the Course of Study for Foreign Languages issued by the Ministry of Education. This section also includes information about the extracurricular English language instruction that takes place in *juku, yobiko* and private conversation schools.

Junior high school

Japanese students begin their formal education in English at the age of twelve in the beginning of junior high school. Classes in public schools are relatively large and often have over forty students in them (Rohlen, 1983: 19). The regular number of English language classes taught per year in junior high school is from 105 to 140, an equivalent of 3 to 4 hours per week. There are only about five textbooks used in public schools' English classrooms all over the country. They must adhere to strict guidelines and be approved by the Ministry of Education. Subsequently, one among these five textbooks is chosen by each district and expected to be used in all of its public schools. In this way, individual teachers have no control over the texts used in their classes (Kitao et al., 1995, electronic document). The 1994 Ministry of Education's Course of Study for Foreign Languages states that the overall objectives for junior high school foreign language education are to develop students' basic abilities to understand a foreign language and express themselves in it, to arouse interest in speaking, foster a positive attitude toward communicating in English, and to deepen interest in language and culture, cultivating basic international understanding (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 1994: 98). In the Course of Study for Foreign Languages issued five

years later, in 1999, we can observe a significant change in overall objectives, which now prioritize and evidently accentuate globalization more strongly than before, and highlight the absolute necessity to develop communication skills. The Japanese Ministry of Education acknowledges that English is used globally and should become a fundamental requirement and a mandatory subject for all Japanese students at public junior high schools (*Chūgakkō gakushū,* 1999: 1, 3). The overall goals of the new line of education became: to create Japanese students who were members of the globalized society, to design foreign language instruction in a way that will lead to developing practical communication skills, to nurture independent thinking, to encourage individualism, and to achieve all these through creative, enhanced educational methods. The Course of Study further states that it is essential to enrich the practical communication skills of Japanese students since they are necessary for international exchange in the globalized contemporary society. Responding to internationalization, the Ministry also acknowledges that it is crucial to be able to cooperate with foreigners and to use a foreign language on a daily basis. In the new Course of Study the Ministry recognizes that previously Japanese students practised English language in a teacher-centered classroom through mechanical methods of replacing words in grammatical sentence patterns. To make English a tool for communication it is important to change the teaching methods and create possibilities for students to use the language in the classroom and to practice expressing their thoughts and feelings. Teachers should also help students to develop a more aggressive attitude, so that they become able easily to

express and convey their thoughts to foreigners. Students should also be able to understand a foreign speaker's intention and be able to express their own viewpoint. The Course of Study also includes exemplary teaching activities and further prescribes which sentence patterns, grammatical categories and pronunciation are to be taught during the three-year junior high school program. Directions also include teaching approximately 1000 words of vocabulary, 490 of which are listed as absolutely compulsory in the Course of Study itself (ibid.: 2, 7, 16, 38, 52).

Senior high school

Senior high school English language classes are equally controlled and shaped by the Ministry of Education's Course of Study. English is divided into six sub-subjects: (1) Oral Communication I with 2 standard hours per week, (2) Oral Communication II with 4 hours per week, (3) English I with 3 hours per week, (4) English II with 4 hours per week, (5) Reading with 4 standard hours per week and (6) Listening with 4 hours per week. The newest Course of Study issued by *Monbushō* in December 1999 makes Oral Communication I and English I compulsory courses. English II is offered as a continuation and can be taken only after completing the English I course. The same applies to Oral Communication II, which can be taken only after completing Oral Communication I. Reading and Listening courses are also offered as a continuation of the compulsory courses (*Kōdō gakkō gakushū*, 1999: 13-5). All of these courses are supposed to continue the English education trajectory launched in junior high school and to teach up-to-

date, contemporary English. The purpose of Oral Communication I is to develop basic communication skills through language activities, which relate to everyday situations, explain English intonation, pronunciation and body language. The focus is to produce students who are able to use foreign language freely in everyday life and develop the ability to express themselves in it. Through numerous listening, writing and reading activities this subject also aims at mastering rules of grammar and developing the ability to make comprehensive presentations in English. (ibid.: 176-8). Oral Communication II encourages more wide-ranging communication activities and focuses on developing discussion skills in students. Emphasizing pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, volume and speed of speech it aims at acquiring the ability to express ones ideas, debate, and make presentations in English. An important part of the course is composed of listening and taking notes as well as reading activities (ibid.: 178-9). The English I course should introduce 400 items of new vocabulary to the words learned in junior high school. It focuses on listening and reading activities, which are designed to enable students to understand information and speakers' intentions in English, and to become able to exchange their opinion. Discussions as well as writing about one's point of view are also intensively practiced (ibid.: 179-181). English II is the advanced, integrated course following English I and should introduce a further 500 words of vocabulary. It emphasizes the nurturing and further development of communication skills as well as listening, reading and writing abilities (ibid.: 181-2). The reading course program focuses on developing and strengthening the ability to understand written

material and the writer's intention, to be able to sum up one's own ideas and present them in a written form. This course should also, however, incorporate activities that help to improve the development of the communication skills (ibid.: 182-3). A writing course is designed to develop understanding of the written language, writing skills and the ability to clearly summarize and express one's idea on paper. It should also incorporate activities promoting and improving communication skills (ibid.: 183-4).

Senior high school English textbooks, like junior high texts, must also be approved by the Minister of Education. In this case, however, individual schools rather than the districts choose the textbooks used in the English classroom. Nonetheless, individual foreign language teachers have very limited control over the chosen textbooks. Regardless of the latest curriculum guidelines, the present syllabus of senior high school English courses is heavily influenced by the content and requirements of the entrance examination to universities or colleges. The typical senior high school English class is based on reading, translation and grammar exercises. Students usually translate English texts word for word and divide them into further studied grammar categories. Composition classes, contrary to the name, consist of translation of short, disconnected Japanese sentences into English (Kitao et. al, 1995, electronic document; LoCastro, 1996: 44, 50-1). The newest Course of Study emphasizes the development of communication skills as equally important to writing and reading. Despite this, until textbooks are changed to ones promoting more communication-oriented activities and until entrance

examinations incorporate evaluations of communication abilities, the chances for significant changes are slim. The official report from the meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum issued in January 2001 states that since university admission requirements determine the profile of high school English education, it is crucial to improve the entrance examinations and to require facility in communication skills. According to this document, until 1999, 45 national, 10 public and 65 private universities reported incorporating the listening component into their entrance examinations. The listening component should be improved, however, and in addition to presenting practical communication skills should be included as a compulsory part of future admission procedures (*Eigo shidō hōhō,* 2001: 21, 51).

English language instruction at *juku, yobiko* and conversation schools

Courses of English language are also offered in privately operated *juku,* which complement school education. They prepare for the senior high school English segment of the entrance examination as well as offer the possibility of an extracurricular drill in English passages and grammar. They help considerably to consolidate the school curriculum material. In addition, they give students an opportunity to experience "real, live" English since many *juku* hire native speakers who teach conversational classes and rehearse basic communication skills with students who otherwise do not have any opportunity to practise them at school (McConnell, 2000: 23; Rohlen, 1983: 104; Miller, 1982: 246).

The curriculum of the typical *yobiko* covers only the subjects relevant for university and college entrance examination. English, being a compulsory component of those, occupies a significant place in the *yobiko* schedule. *Yobiko* teachers must have relevant knowledge about the university entrance examination in order to point out and convey only the appropriate parts of the material to the students. The typical class schedule includes at least two English classes a day. Among the courses are English composition, English translation, comprehensive English, English words and English grammar. There is no interaction between teachers and students during *yobiko* English classes. Teachers usually lecture on assigned topics to the large audiences of students (Tsukada, 1991: 23-25).

Eikaiwa gakkō (英会話学校, private English conversation schools) offer an alternative to the entrance examination oriented high school courses and are the response to the ongoing national debate that formal English education does not promote the acquisition of conversational skills. They, like *juku* and *yobiko*, differ in size and can range from small schools run in a local community center to large establishments with networks covering most of the country. The classes are usually much smaller than in high schools and students are placed in groups according to their level of ability in English. *Eikaiwa gakkō* are the place where Japanese children, students as well as adults, can have the experience of talking to and hearing spoken English from a teacher who is a native speaker. They offer exposure to modern, everyday English and are a way to learn more about other cultures. Conversation schools teach practical, communicative English, which

plays no part in the complicated entrance examination procedures. The kind of English language experience offered by *eikaiwa gakkō* is usually pursued privately by the Japanese who want to get acquainted with foreign culture, spend time around foreigners and also have plans of traveling or working abroad. It is important to recognize that *eikaiwa gakkō* offer a practical study of English as a language whereas *eigo kyōiku* (英語教育, language education at schools) stands for the process of studying the kind of English necessary in order to survive and advance in the competitive pursuit to pass the entrance examinations (McConnell, 2000: 23; Kitao, 1995 electronic document; Miller, 1982: 276-8).

Teacher training

English language teachers in junior and senior high schools come from colleges with teacher training courses and universities of education. They must hold a Bachelor's degree and have at least two weeks of teaching practice at a local school. The national requirement for an English language teaching certificate include six credits in English linguistics, six in English literature, two in composition and conversation, 16 credits in subjects related to Western literature and culture and 14 credits in general professional subjects like practice teaching, psychology etc. (Lamie, 1998: 521; Kitao, 1995, electronic document). During their teacher training process, future English language instructors are not required to attain communicative skills. Most courses are committed to covering grammar, translation, history and theory of English teaching and commonly courses devoted to methods of teaching English do not come with the opportunity to actually

practice what future teachers are learning. The focus is, therefore, on traditional theory with very limited practical experience (Lamie, 1998: 522; LoCastro, 1996: 42). According to the 1998 survey conducted by Judith Lamie, among one hundred senior high school English teachers, about 77 percent did not receive any training for communicative language teaching during their university education. As a result, it has been hard for the teachers educated in this manner to attempt to fulfill the communication-oriented requirements of the revised English language curricula. In 1979, to alleviate this problem, the Ministry of Education established a two-month program for Japanese teachers in Britain and The United States. The program placed the teachers in an English-speaking environment and aimed at improving their language skills and developing their teaching techniques. By attending seminars and observing teaching strategies in foreign schools they were supposed to acquire new ideas about teaching styles and methods. In 1988 this exchange program was extended to 6 months and in 1990 to one year (Lamie, 1998: 525).

Similar programs were also launched at the University of Alberta. In 2001 seven master EFL teachers from Japan came to Canada as a part of the six-month Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT)-University of Alberta Intensive Teacher Training Program. During the first two months of the MEXT program, teachers were improving their English language skills taking ESL courses at the University of British Columbia and the University of Ottawa. For the last four months of that exchange program all the teachers met at the University of Alberta to take courses

enhancing their pedagogy and cultural knowledge. All the teachers completed the MEXT program with theses recommending communicative skills oriented improvements in English language instruction in Japanese schools. Another program at the University of Alberta, the Hokkaido-Teachers of English Project (HTEP) started in the spring of 2001. HTEP provides a four-week professional development program of active learning for elementary and secondary teachers of English from Hokkaido, Alberta's sister province. The HTEP program objectives are: to improve English language skills and gain cultural knowledge and insights through English language and cultural immersion; to learn, experience and critically reflect upon recent English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Second language (ESL) teaching methodologies, and to experience professional development, through school visits and reflective practice, in an English language cultural environment. The results showed a strong improvement in oral language ability of the teachers who participated in the exchange (HTEP and MEXT, 2001). It is worth mentioning that the report from the 2001 meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum, states clearly that English teachers should be trained in real spoken English during their university years and local boards of education should include and emphasize communication skills in their recruitment procedures for language teachers (*Eigo shidō hōhō,* 2001: 16-7).

Monbushō revisions of the English language education – toward the change

Since 1960 when the Japanese government established the Council for Improvement of English Teaching, the revision of teaching philosophy toward a

communication-oriented approach in secondary schools was constantly on the national agenda. From the beginning reform proposals included introducing activities based on aural-oral exercises and the enhancement of teacher training programs at the university. In 1975 the same Council recommended again several other reforms regarding more intensive in-service and overseas teacher training and the communication-oriented improvement of English language curricula. Despite these repeated calls for change and recommendations English language education remained virtually unaffected and without much improvement. The National Council for Educational Reform formed in 1984 yet again concluded that the teaching of English had not been efficient. It requested organizing an in-service training for English teachers, hiring more native speakers at all levels of schools, reconsideration of the objectives for teaching English and revision of teaching policy toward a communication oriented approach in secondary schools (Koike & Tanaka, 1995: 17-20). A new Course of Study issued in 1987 stated that international communication should be the ultimate goal of the reformed English language education. Oral Communication A, B, and C courses were introduced into the senior high school curricula (these courses were renamed as Oral Communication I and II in the 1999 Course of Study). They were designed to train listening and speaking abilities through conversational activities (course A), to improve listening comprehension (course B), and to develop discussion and debating ability (course C). Subsequent curriculum guidelines issued in 1994 again emphasized the importance of Oral Communication courses. Though over time A

and B courses proved to be quite successful with students, the C course's goals were found to be unclear by teachers and it was adopted by very few schools (McConnell, 2000: 255; Koike & Tanaka, 1995: 20). In 1998 the Reform Council also introduced the concept of English language taught at the primary school level all over the country. Since 1992, the Ministry had already begun experimenting with primary school level English education in two public elementary schools in Osaka, and until 1994 included fourteen more schools in this experimental list (Koike & Tanaka, 1995: 22). During the 2001 meeting regarding the improvement of the English language curriculum, Ministry of Education officials requested the introduction from April 2002 of *Sōgōtekina gakushū-no jikan* (総合的な学習の時間, Period of Integrated Studies) at the elementary school level. This period is provided instead of some hours of Japanese language, ethics and social studies, but is not supposed to be devoted exclusively to English language study. It is composed of different activities such as field trips, nature watching, volunteer work, observation and research through experiments, as well as English language instruction. This period of integrated studies should help each school to promote international understanding and be of assistance for children in developing survival skills suitable for the globalized society. Foreign language conversation and foreign culture study are supposed to form a considerable component of this new period and be taught in a student-centered way. The report states that language and culture activities should give children a chance to experiment with language during

a period of diverse, relaxed and loose study. According to Ministry of Education officials, after an introductory phase, Period of Integrated Studies would become a compulsory subject in elementary schools (*Eigo shidō hōhō,* 2001: 48-9).

Japan Exchange and Teaching Program – JET

Background

The launching of the JET program in 1987 provided a considerable impetus to the English education reforms that had been promoted by the Ministry of Education for almost forty years. The outline of the JET plan appeared two years earlier, in the 1985 statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The statement entitled "Plans for International Exchange Projects" represented a list of possible international exchange strategies such as sister city plans and exchanges of local government personnel. According to McConnell (2000), the JET program was one of the Japanese responses to:

> the 1985 conflict with the United States over Japan's fifty billion dollars annual trade surplus. Under heavy American pressure, Prime Minister Nakasone formed the *Maekawa* Committee to study medium and long-term policy measures to deal with Japan's economic and social structure in a changing international environment (McConnell, 2000: 34).

The JET program appeared as one of the committee's concrete proposals to break Japan's cultural and educational isolation and to put more emphasis on Japanese students mastering English as a tool of communication. The forthcoming benefits of the JET program would be educating a new generation of Japanese students fluent in English language and able to promote Japan among Western countries

(McConnell, 2000: 33-48). After a period of negotiations, in 1987, *Monbushō* together with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, put the JET program into action. The initial year of the program brought to Japan 813 participants from Australia, New Zealand, Britain and the United States. In 1993 the number of participants reached 3, 508 and in 2000 it reached 6,078 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 1994: 7; The JET Program 2000-2001; 4). Now the program is conducted by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, Ministry of Public Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education (The JET Program 2000-2001: 5).

Aims of the JET Program

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program seeks to improve Japan's internationalization by helping to promote international exchange at a local level, by promoting understanding between Japan and other countries and by fostering ties between Japanese youth and foreign youth (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 1994: 6). The objectives of the program are achieved by offering JET program participants the opportunity to serve in local government organizations and to teach in public and private junior and senior high schools. The JET Program enables local authorities to employ young foreigners in their workplace for the purpose of improving foreign language education as well as to promote international exchange at the community level (ibid.: 6-7).

Duties of the Participants

There are two kinds of positions offered to JET participants: 1) CIR (Coordinator for International Relations) placed in the offices of local authorities, and 2) ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) assigned to local boards of education or schools to teach under the guidance of Japanese teachers of foreign language. CIRs' duties are to assist in projects related to international activities like translating, editing pamphlets into a foreign language, designing and implementing local exchange programs, assisting in language instruction of local employees and residents, and raising cross-cultural awareness. ALTs assist in classes taught by a Japanese foreign language teacher in junior and senior high schools as well as in elementary schools. They help to prepare the supplementary teaching materials for foreign language classes, assist language training of Japanese teachers and foreign language speech contests. They also engage in local exchange projects and activities. For the most part, however, ALTs assist Japanese teachers in developing students' communicative abilities in the foreign language and serve as a cultural resource person (The JET Program 2000-2001; 11-2).

Does it really work?

The presence of an ALT in the classrooms aimed at giving students an immediate motive to use a foreign language as a means of communication. The introduction of the ALTs as part of a teaching team had, therefore, a specific purpose of enhancing communicative activities in the classroom. According to the JET Program objectives, the team-teaching instructors (namely, Japanese English

teacher in cooperation with the visiting ALT) plan the language class, teach and evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson together. Furthermore, the presence of two teachers is supposed to ensure a better interaction between the instructors and the learners (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 1994: 14-5). But how does it really work in everyday practice?

The JET Program and team-teaching have undoubtedly touched many schools and led to changes in English classrooms all over Japan. Since its establishment JET continues to get an overwhelmingly positive response from Japanese students. Although it is hard to underestimate the positive changes that the JET Program has introduced into Japanese foreign language teaching, there are many aspects of this project that did not yield expected results. McConnell (2000), who observed many team-taught classes in Japanese schools, maintains that spontaneous interactions between the ALTs and Japanese students were rather minimal. Too often the Japanese teachers' strategies are gathered around two extremes. Either the ALT was put in charge of the entire class and was managing the lesson by him/herself or an ALT was pushed aside, asked only occasionally to demonstrate a proper pronunciation like a human tape recorder. In 1988, the survey about team-teaching conducted among Japanese foreign language teachers confirmed that half of the teachers at the junior high school and about two thirds of those at the senior high school level were not satisfied with the fact of having an ALT in the classroom (ibid.: 211).

> One might expect that the introduction of an outsider into the tight-knit culture of the schools would result in serious disruption, radically altering the chemistry of the community; but instead all the other elements, from the principal down to students, reconfigure themselves to minimize the effects of the outside agent (ibid.: 227).

Conclusions

Several characteristics of the institutional framework can be highlighted from the description in this chapter of the overall picture of Japanese education and English instruction in high schools. First, there is a rigid institutional, centralized control over the whole educational system in Japan and English language curriculum within this establishment. Historically, periods of decentralization, liberal changes and attempts to introduce innovative methods of teaching English were short lived and followed by tight control by the Ministry of Education and promotion of moral education and traditional ethical values. These reverse reforms transformed Japanese education into a uniform structure with a strong moral and ethical doctrine as its basis. Second, entrance examinations to senior high schools and universities are crucial to the educational careers of Japanese students. Entrance examinations channel students into different schools and ability groups and consequently into different careers in society. Therefore, preparations for the compulsory English component of these entrance examinations remains an important issue in English language teaching and support the choice of the traditional grammar-translation methods. Moreover, extracurricular English activities in *juku* and *yobiko* are also focused on the material that is most likely to

appear on the entrance examination tests. Third, English teachers working in junior and senior high schools have been receiving insufficient training, in not being required to attain communicative skills in English, nor being trained for communicative language teaching. Fourth, since 1960 *Monbushō* has been undertaking numerous attempts to enhance English language education by introducing more communication-oriented activities in the curriculum and intensive in-service and overseas teacher training. These attempts have been especially forceful during the past twenty-five years with the introduction of the JET program and junior and senior high school Courses of Study for Foreign Languages that place ever-inereasing emphasis on developing practical communication skills in students.

The existence of these institutional characteristics in Japanese English education and their influence on current Japanese English teachers and students has been further tested through the questionnaires discussed in Chapter Four. Prior to that discussion, the next chapter examines cultural and ideological factors that also must be considered in Japanese English education.

Chapter Three

Cultural and Ideological Framework of Japanese English Language Teaching and Learning

The present study took as a starting point the investigation of some cultural and ideological factors that affect English language education, implementation of reforms, and the way Japanese teach and learn English in the language classroom. Furthermore, various authors (e.g., Caroll, 2001; Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; Norris, 1996; Nishiyama, 1995; Clancy, 1990; Thompson, 1987) have indicated that these cultural and ideological factors contribute to the formation of the so-called "Japanese communicative style", which strongly influences the student-teacher relationship and the methods used in the language classroom. The main characteristics of the "Japanese communicative style" include: 1) the tendency to be more formal, 2) giving recognition to status relationships between speakers rather than to level of familiarity, 3) behaving smoothly to avoid disagreement, 4) the avoidance of talking about personal feelings or making direct statements, 5) the preference for conversations that stress instinctive understanding and mutuality of feelings, and 6) the inclination to be less verbal and use silence in intercultural interactions (Norris, 1996: 21-3). The cultural and ideological factors explored in this chapter are those relating to the "Japanese communicative style", in terms of the attitude of Japanese toward their group and toward English language and foreigners as reflected in their history, culture and beliefs. Aspects described here involve Confucianism and transformation of its ideologies in Japanese education,

kokutai ideology and policies promulgated by the Ministry of Education based on its principles, as well as aspects of cultural nationalism in the form of *nihonjinron* ideology. These discussions are followed by consideration of, and reflection on, the Japanese cultural sense of selfhood and Japanese perception of *kikokushijo*, also called returnee school children, who have lived and attended school abroad for at least several months.

The transformation of Confucian values in Japanese education

This section will describe the main principles of the Confucian ethical and moral system as well as the history of their presence in the Japanese educational system. It will also shed light on the place and importance of *kokoro* (心, spiritual aspect) and character development in present Japanese schooling. How these factors influence the teaching and learning of English in Japanese junior and senior high schools will be examined in the last part of this chapter.

The Confucian ethical and moral system

The teachings of Confucius (551 - 479 BC) are contained in the *Analects* (論語, *Rongo*), which are composed of twenty books, each consisting of a collection of sentence- or paragraph-length sayings of the master Confucius as recorded by his pupils. The entire teaching is more practical, moral and ethical than religious. Confucius taught the principles of proper conduct and social relationships that embraced high ethical and moral standards. The key elements of Confucian teachings describing the attitude of the individual were *jin* (仁), which stood for

unselfishness and love for humanity; *toku* (徳), which meant virtue; *gi* (義) righteousness, and *rei* (礼), which meant an entire code for a gentleman's social conduct (Parrinder, 1983: 320). Furthermore, Confucius emphasized filial piety in a much wider sense than respect for one's parents. Filial piety meant not only duty and respect towards dead parents and ancestors (*To be prudent in mourning and to remember those who have passed away before is to enhance the virtue of the people* [http://www.Confucius.org/Analects, Chapter 1 verse 9]), but was extended to five relationships: of ruler and his subject, father and son, older and younger brother, husband and wife, and friend to friend. In practical terms, it embraced attitudes of respect for a senior and a reciprocal attitude of love and affection on the part of a senior to his or her junior – both as a part of daily conduct during life, and after death as a religious obligation in ceremonial worship (*In serving parents make suggestions tactfully, and if your aspirations are not pursued, still respect and do not disobey, bear burdens and do not complain* [Chapter 4 Verse18]; *In the home, the young should behave with filial piety, and out in the world with brotherly love. They should be prudent and trustworthy. They should love all people and be benevolent. Having so done, their remaining strength should be used to learn literature* [Chapter 1 Verse 6]). Confucius also recognized the great value of knowledge and proclaimed education for all regardless of their class (*Adhere to your beliefs and be devoted to learning* [Chapter 8 Verse 13]; *Learn as if behind, and still be afraid of losing of what has been learned* [Chapter 8 Verse 17]). He

believed that educational achievements of the individual are for the benefit of the whole society. Young people should, therefore, spend their time being obedient, respectful and truthful. They should devote any spare time for learning and becoming an ideal disciple who follows faithfully in the footsteps of his scholarly seniors and recognizes their authority.

The history of Confucianism in Japanese education

Since its first appearance in Japan at the beginning of the fourth century, Confucian ethical concepts were progressively incorporated into the Japanese religious, governmental and educational establishment penetrating political and moral thought. This chapter shows the constant presence and profound influence of Confucian ethics on Japanese education from inception until today. Its ethical principles have contributed considerably to the classroom relationships between students and teachers, consequently influencing the way that English has been taught and learned. Given that Confucianism forms the grounds for moral education and character development in schools, its authority is very relevant for Japanese education and English language instruction within this establishment.

In 604, during the Yamato Era, Prince Shotoku established The Seventeen Article Constitution, which was a set of ethical and moral instructions inspired almost entirely by Confucian teachings. During that period of the supremacy of the court aristocracy, Confucianism served as an instrument regulating sociopolitical relationships. It helped to strengthen the original belief in filial piety, loyalty and ancestor worship. From the moment of its appearance in Japan, Confucianism was

seen as a system of ethics, and not as a religion and also influenced Shinto through the works of educated monks, who studied Chinese readings and philosophy contributing to the infiltration of Japanese religion by Chinese ethics (Parrinder 1983: 355; Tsunoda et al, 1958: 343).

The strongest influence of Confucianism in Japan took place during the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) when it was introduced to the whole society through the education system. No longer accessible only to the aristocratic class, its doctrines influenced *bushidō*, the moral code of the leading class of *samurai.* It also formed a sociopolitical base for the Tokugawa clan's rule. Following the Confucian teachings the *Bakufu* government established a strong, central authority in the shogun and built strict legal rules that defined the privileges and duties of every social class. Absolute loyalty and devotion to the superior were the key moral values at that time. In 1630 Hayashi Razan founded a private Academy, which in 1690 was converted to a government school named *Shōheikō* (The School of Prosperous Peace). It propagated Neo-Confucian studies of *Shushi-gaku* (朱子学, Chu-Hsi learning/study), which during the Tokugawa period were elevated to the official philosophy of the ruling authorities (Tubielewicz, 1984: 298-9). *Shushi-gaku* was a philosophy based on the teachings of the Chinese Neo-Confucianist Chu-Hsi (1130-1200). Its main beliefs were: fundamental rationalism, which stressed objective reason as a basis for conduct; essential humanism, which focused directly on man and his human relationships;

historicism, which stressed the need for deep study of Japanese and Chinese history, and ethnocentrism, which underlined the loyalty toward legitimate rulers of the country and emphasized the distinction between eastern (meaning Japanese and Chinese) civilizations and foreign barbarism. This last characteristic in particular helped to strengthen already existing loyalty to the *shogun* and intense xenophobia (Tsunoda et. al., 1958: 351-2). The Shogunate established a series of official government schools assigned for feudal lords (*daimyō*), their children, bureaucrats and *samurai*. Students in those schools learned Chinese characters, Chinese classics and history, as well as proper conduct and etiquette, where *chū* (忠, loyalty towards the master) and *kō* (孝, loyalty of the son toward his father were particularly emphasized (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 52-3). Moreover, education during that period evolved into a network of private and government schools, which were able to provide instruction for a wide social spectrum. Among them were clan schools (藩学, *hangaku* and 共学, *kyōgaku*) established by feudal lords to teach the children of noble and military classes (Hall, 1971: 213-4). The courses lasted six or seven years and were mainly concerned with Confucian teachings and calligraphy. The compulsory readings consisted of *Gokyō* (五経, Classics of Filial Piety), *Shogaku* (Simple Maxims of Sages), *Rongo* (論語, Discourses of Confucius and his Disciples), *Mōshi* (孟子, Discourses of Mencius), and *Shunjiu* (Annals of the Chou Dynasty by Confucius) (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 52-3). The curriculum stressed teaching ethics and moral training as well as

studying Chinese history and classics. This was supposed to establish moral philosophy, which would help students with their individual conduct and with fulfilling the expectations of the family and society. The teacher at school was treated with great respect and obedience and his teaching accepted without any question and interruptions. Outside the classroom students were not supposed to "...tread within three feet of his teacher's shadow" (ibid.: 56-7). The Tokugawa government also encouraged education for the common masses, the lower military class, farmers and townspeople in *terakoya* (寺子屋, the primary level temple schools) and *shijuku* (私塾, secondary schools) (Hall, 1971: 213-4, Tubielewicz, 1996: 64). The main subjects taught in those schools were Confucian and Buddhist philosophy, calligraphy, reading and Chinese classics. The teachings again stressed moral virtues and reverence for ancestors and gods. During the Tokugawa period there were approximately 15,000 *terakoya* schools, some of them with as many as 600 students (Hall, 1971: 214). Consequently, it can be said that during that period education became widely accessible and spread to all classes of society (except 部落民, *burakumin* - the lowest class, which was not provided any education). Since Confucian ideology and moral principles were a starting point for education on every level and in every kind of school, its influence in shaping the Japanese nation during the Tokugawa period cannot be underestimated. In 1857 a school for studying foreign books and languages was established in Edo (it later grew to become Japan's top Tokyo Imperial University). A year later Fukuzawa Yukichi

founded Keio University in Tokyo, which promoted Western studies, especially physics, economics and English language (Tsunoda et al., 1958: 624). Confronted by a more advanced Western civilization, Japanese scholars and intellectuals, although shaped by Confucian ethics and classical studies, recognized and advocated the urgent need for reforms. On the other hand, however, most of them remained profoundly devoted to the classical school of Confucian teachings and considered them an obligatory basis for the new program of reforms (Tubielewicz, 1984: 311). A good example is Shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune himself. His interest in Western learning and encouragement of the practice of Western scholarship simultaneously emphasized his respect for orthodox Confucianism and patronage to Confucian schools (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 58).

The end of the Tokugawa era in Japan's history meant an end of the isolation of the country from European and other Western influence and the beginning of a new trend of passionate interest in Western scholarship and innovations. That interest was, however, selective and careful and did not ultimately influence the strongly installed, Confucian-based moral and ethical structure of Japanese society. Borrowing from Western civilizations Japanese people demonstrated a remarkable eclecticism. The process of adopting Western knowledge was from the beginning associated with the larger purpose of improving national defense ("using the barbarian to control the barbarian" (Beasley, 1995: 1)). The beginning of the Meiji Restoration found Japan's education prominently shaped by Confucian ethics, with the sense of vulnerability and inferiority to

foreign culture and thought combined with the certainty that the educational process is an instrument for promoting political and social order rather than the development of the individual.

In the Educational Code of 1872, the early Meiji educational system tried to break ties with the Confucian-based school system and strongly stressed practical, utilitarian aspects of learning. From this time forth, education was supposed to become a tool in forming a new kind of consciousness of a modern, independent and new Japan. Fukuzawa Yukichi, a leading Meiji scholar and initially a critic of Confucianism, proclaimed the spirit of Western civilization and enthusiastically propagated the idea of *jitsugaku* (実学, a practical branch of learning), which concentrated on practical, solid knowledge of astronomy, chemistry, medicine and economics to replace the old learning that viewed knowledge as a means to help a man fulfill his moral duties (Blacker, 1964: 32, 50-1). Still, education in a Western way appeared unfamiliar to most Japanese, who were used to Confucian ethics and education based upon them. Traditional values of loyalty, obligation, solidarity and duty to superiors held back support for the Meiji government educational strategy. In 1879, concerned about the indiscriminate absorption of Western learning, the Emperor lamented the general decay of public morals and the government gradually withdrew from its previous modernization policy in education. A new movement of traditionalists began to emerge. They defended traditional Japanese values and consequently propagated the return to Confucian principles in education. Teachers were encouraged to enforce strict discipline founded on

Confucian moral concepts (Wakabayashi, 1998: 106; Tubielewicz, 1996: 65; Luhmer, 1990: 172). The Imperial Rescript on Education issued in 1890 became the most important foundation for moral education in Japanese schools until 1945. Its content rested mostly on the ideologies of State Shinto and Confucianism, urging unconditional sacrifice for the Emperor and loyalty towards the country. The *Rescript* was treated with religious reverence, kept together with a picture of the Emperor and recited in front of all students on every national festival and official occasion. Subsequently, in 1937, the climax of the nationalistic and Confucianist indoctrination at schools was reached with the publication of the *Kokutai-no Hongi* (国体の本義, Principles of the National Polity). This document, issued by the Ministry of Education, motivated the claim of the Japanese nation with the Emperor at its center to rule the entire world. It was also the foundation of the school curriculum until the end of World War II (Luhmer, 1990: 176).

Post World War II reforms

The present system of education in Japan crystallized as a result of the series of reforms carried out after the end of the Second World War. The new Constitution was enacted in 1946 and defined the basic, equal rights of the people to receive nine years of compulsory education free of charge. The Fundamental Law of Education was issued in March 1947 and instituted under American supervision. It was an attempt to break with the Confucian tradition in education and with the ethical tenets propagated by the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890), which had been the foundation for Japanese educational policy for more than fifty years

(Katsuta & Nakauchi, 1999: 31). Ostensibly, Japan stepped on the path of reeducation in the spirit of democracy. After 1960, however, conservative circles in Japan began to criticize the lack of a clear ethics program in the reformed education program claiming that it bore no reference to the long history of Confucian values and could not contribute effectively to the formation of Japanese citizens. The preamble of a report "The image of the Ideal Japanese Person" issued in 1966 stated:

> In the present situation of education in Japan, it is felt that due attention should be paid to such educational objectives as national consciousness, awareness of society and consciousness of values of vocation and virtue of work and also the meaning of being an individual with a strong will. What is presented here is a picture of various moral virtues inherent in human nature (Luhmer, 1990: 180).

Although religion and ethics classes were removed from the school curricula and replaced with social studies by the Occupation Authorities, they gradually found their way back into the programs and now form an integral part of the curriculum. At the senior high school level, social studies has been replaced by two new subjects - history/geography and *kōmin* (公民, citizenship), which is in fact nothing more than a systematic teaching of ethics (ibid.: 182). At the primary school level the list of qualities to cultivate in children includes respect for the parents and teachers, good relations with classmates, and discipline. Children are exposed to collective tasks, which contributes to their awareness of being a member of the group and teaches them to consider the needs of the group as equally important as their own (Hendry, 1995: 100). At junior and senior high schools, during ethics

lessons, students are taught self-discipline and control, how to live and behave in society during adolescence, and how to cultivate their national identity in relation with the international community (Luhmer, 1990: 182; Tubielewicz, 1984: 426).

Purpose of education: "*kokoro*"

According to Okamoto Kaoru, a Deputy Director of the International Affairs Division in the Japanese Ministry of Education, one of the most important characteristics of the present education in Japan is its emphasis on spiritual training (namely *kokoro*) and character development rather than practical knowledge and skills (Okamoto, 2001: 9). His book "Education of the Rising Sun 21: An Introduction to Education in Japan", is a sociocultural analysis of education in Japan for foreigners. As indicated by Okamoto, *kokoro* is a concept with a wide range of meaning including heart, mind, soul, spirit, attitude, value system and humanity. There is no subject called *kokoro* and it cannot be defined in terms of units or credits since it is related to an attitude and value system and is learned and lived in all classes and throughout all activities at school. The process of education is, therefore, viewed by the Japanese to be much more than a simple acquisition of knowledge. It is something with a highly spiritual purpose of developing a *kokoro* and therefore is considered superior, desirable and advantageous. Only the activities that contribute to the aspiration of fully developing the *kokoro* in students are considered to be a true *kyōiku* (教育, education). Pursuit of knowledge and skills does not hold as high a status as *kyōiku* (ibid.: 10-1). Japanese teachers play a crucial role in developing children's *kokoro*. The strategy for character

development remains rooted in Confucian ethics and centers around fostering respect for the elderly, harmony and agreement among group members, feelings of gratitude, and keeping moral values of truth and respect (ibid.: 27, 37, 40). Recent educational reforms in Japan are centered, however, around the acquisition of knowledge and skills, since they are necessary for coping with ongoing social and economic changes. While officials like Okamoto vigorously point out that the primary aim of education is the development of *kokoro* it has become obvious that children have to be appropriately and sufficiently educated so that they can function in international circles. The implications of these contrastive views, as well as Confucian ethics, for English language education are discussed below.

Implication for English language education

A very short period of democratic changes in the Japanese educational system after World War II was quickly brought to a halt with a strong promotion of moral education and traditional ethical values. The Western ways of life visible on the surface of Japanese existence today are unquestionably overpowered by their centuries-old value system. The uniform and coherent educational system supported by strong moral and ethical principles has managed to convey Confucian values in Japanese education throughout the centuries (Christopher, 1983: 44, 46, 52, 82-3; Hendry, 1995: 112). Japanese schools are extremely ordered and teach self-discipline, moral values and dedication. This creates students with abilities corresponding to the needs of a tight and demanding social system (Hendry, 1995:108-9).

Communicative Language Teaching[8] is a present and urgent goal of the new English language curricula. According to it, learning is viewed as the development of a skill rather than a process of acquiring knowledge. English is considered a means for communication and students are encouraged to learn through using and experimenting with it in the classroom. The focus on the communicative aspects of the language is achieved through role-play, games and problem-solving tasks. Since the goal is to develop the learners' communicative competence[9] the teacher in the CLT classroom is supposed to assist the student and be his helper rather than knower of all the information. Furthermore, a CLT lesson involves intensive oral participation on the side of the student. However, Confucian influences in formal education in today's Japan are still evidently present. As a result, Japanese students of English approach textbooks and teachers as authorities. They incorporate principles of Japanese hierarchical social relationships into their learning environment, treating teachers with distance, respect and obedience, avoiding questions and active participation as individuals and maintaining the harmony within the group. They expect the teacher, who is the authority and provider of

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[8] The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method appeared initially in Europe in the early 1970s as a counterweight to methods that stressed the teaching of grammatical forms and paid little attention to the way the language is used in everyday situations. The method was mainly established and developed through practice and research in an ESL (English as a Second Language) context in countries like Britain, the United States and Canada. In CLT programs attention is paid to recreating everyday life situations and teaching various language patterns that the learner would most likely meet and use in those circumstances (Crystal, 1997: 373, 378; Li, 1998; 678-9).

[9] Communicative competence can be defined as "demonstrated ability to negotiate mutual meanings rules and positive outcomes, the most important of which is confirmation of the preferred identity" (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999: 207).

knowledge, to explain the contents of the book, which they will learn through attentive listening. Japanese English language teaching is therefore heavily influenced by this particular, culturally loaded behavior in the language classroom. Consequently, innovative ways of teaching English and modes of communication in the modern classroom are difficult to superimpose on students and teachers whose attitudes toward and perceptions about English have been influenced by Confucian ethics for an extended period of time (Scollon, 1999: 15; Koike & Tanaka, 1995: 23).

Kokutai ideology

Kokutai (the fundamental character of the nation) together and in the same way as Confucianism, helped to strongly influence and shape the Japanese educational system. The following section will explain the foundations and principles of *kokutai* and discuss the history and impact of this ideology on the early development of the modern schooling system in Japan. It will also analyze the content of *Kokutai no Hongi* (Fundamentals of Our National Polity), the document based entirely on *kokutai* ideology, which dominated Japanese education until the end of World War II.

Definition

Kokutai as an ideology propagated a belief in the continuous ancestral tradition of the Imperial house. It stated that Japanese were linked by blood to a single Imperial family, whose origins could be traced back to the age of gods. By generalizing the living emperor into a timeless series of emperors-in-sequence,

kokutai seemed to offer an abstract splendor. This ideology provided a past, which was ageless, and continuous in its ancestral traditions. During the 1930s, when increasingly powerful fascist and nationalist ideas took hold in Japan, *kokutai* was a convenient term for pointing out all the ways in which the Japanese nation as a political and racial entity was different from and superior to other nations. It served as a definition of identity for the whole nation and helped distinguish and separate "them" from "us" (Gluck, 1985: 143-6). *Kokutai* claimed that the monarchy was the supreme embodiment of the entire system of patriarchal human relationships in the society. Motoda Eifu, a Confucian scholar, tutor and personal advisor to the Emperor Meiji, interpreted it as a moral religious and mystical entity based on the overpowering authority of the house head in both the family and the state (Wakabayashi, 1998: 126, 320-1). The ideas of *kokutai* were developed further in the literature and press of the prewar period validating the system of patriarchal social relationships and nationalism. A good example of this kind of writing are the articles of Takabatake Motoyuki published in his journal *Kokka Shakaishugi* (国家社会主義, National Socialism) in 1918 and later:

> Japanese *kokutai* is truly ideal. Furthermore, our Imperial family has maintained a blood kinship between the people of the nation, and thus has preserved its position as the center of control for many thousands of years. For this reason the attitude of the people toward it embodies a form of mysterious reverence and filial piety, which is fundamentally different from the relationship between sovereign and subjects in other countries (Morris-Suzuki, 1998: 89).

Likewise, one of the most influential scholars at the turn of the century and dean of the law faculty at Tokyo Imperial University, Hozumi Yatsuka, elaborated on *kokutai* writing:

> The ancestor of my ancestors is the Sun Goddess. The Sun Goddess is the founder of our race, and the throne is the sacred house of our race. If father and mother are to be revered, how much more so the ancestors of the house; and if the ancestors of the house are to be revered, how much more so the founder of the country (Wakabayashi, 1998: 126).

Kokutai ideology in education

In February 1869 the Meiji government issued a directive in which, for the first time, the establishment of elementary schools was mentioned. The document stated the content of primary education: traditional subjects such as reading, writing and arithmetic were to be taught together with the introduction and explanations of the ideology of *kokutai*. Teachers were supposed to teach the way of loyalty and filiality and to secure and support Confucian moral traditions (Gluck, 1985: 104). *Kokutai* in education disappeared within a year of the issuing of the above document but reemerged in 1885 together with the appointment of Mori Arinori as minister of Education. Mori, although a spokesman for enlightenment, helped to push education in a conservative direction by pointing out that it should firstly elevate the spirit of the nation. In his speech in 1887 he said:

> Reading, writing and arithmetic are not our major concern in the education and instruction of the young. Education is entirely a matter of bringing up men of character. And who are these men of character? ...they are good subjects required by our Empire. And who are these good subjects?...they are those

> persons who live up fully to their responsibilities as Imperial Subjects (Wakabayashi, 1998: 127).

Kokutai ideology in education further secured its position with the publishing of the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890, which soon formed the basis of national education and remained so until 1946 when the Americans demanded changes in the curriculum. The *Rescript* brought the devotion and admiration for the imperial ancestors into the public arena. It did not refer only to Confucianism but also to the ordinary morality of the Japanese people, which has been transmitted from the earliest times even before Confucianism and Buddhism (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999: 18-9). Among other points it stated:

> Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education...guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers (Gluck, 1985: 121).

The *Rescript* was soon raised to the status of a national doctrine becoming a civil code of morality, loyalty and patriotism not only for schools but also for the whole public.

In brief, during the late Tokugawa period *kokutai* ideology served as a foundation for Imperial restoration. Soon after, it was submerged under the enlightenment ideology and a fascination with Western civilization. In 1869 *kokutai* emerged again, unchanged as an instrument of indoctrination in education. It managed to establish a strong and influential position in educational curricula for

the next seventy years. During the first half of the Meiji period there was a constant and growing emphasis on teaching English. In fact, this language was recognized as the single way to understand and follow Western knowledge. However, the impact of foreign influences upon traditional Japanese culture resulted in social and ideological confusion. The revival and strengthening of *kokutai* ideology, which came with the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890, significantly limited the importance of English language education and import of Western ideas. It served to reinstate old moral and ideological values in Japanese education. By making moral instruction again the fundamental object of Japanese education it had an immediate effect on a wide spectrum of Japanese society (Keenleyside & Thomas, 1937: 92, 98-102).

Kokutai no Hongi 1937 (Fundamentals of Our National Polity)

Kokutai no Hongi, issued by the Ministry of Education in 1937, was another powerful manifestation of *kokutai* ideology and was designed to set the ideological course for the whole Japanese nation. It dominated all Japanese education for almost ten years and had a deep and lasting influence on Japanese thought during the 1930s and 1940s. *Kokutai no Hongi* was a document of 156 pages written by Hisamatsu Senichi, a well-known scholar and professor of traditional Japanese literature (Miller, 1982: 94-5). The introduction of *Kokutai no Hongi* stated:

> The body of this work presents a resumé of Japanese traditions concerning the founding of the country and of the Imperial House, the virtues of imperial rule and of loyal subjects, manifestations of the Japanese spirit in history, natural features of Japan, and the inherent character of the people, as well as

> manifestation of these in the social and cultural life of the nation (Tsunoda et al, 1958: 786-795 adopted from Hall and Gauntlett, 1949).

Furthermore, the text emphasized that the new mission of Japanese people is to: "build up a new Japanese culture by adopting some aspects of Western cultures with our national polity at the basis" (ibid.). The document was distributed to the schoolteachers across the country and accompanied with special instruction to make every effort possible to reach ideological uniformity in education.

Kokutai no Hongi shared, renewed and strengthened the ideology presented in the Imperial Rescript on Education from 1890 and was a manual of patriotic education containing official state teachings on almost every aspect of domestic policy. Although its initial print run was only three hundred thousand copies, eventually it was distributed to over two million people and was studied with reverence at every level in Japanese schools (Gluck, 1985: 283). Whereas the Occupation decree of December 15, 1945 forbade further transmission of *kokutai* ideology in schools, its influence, deep impact and traces have continued to be very hard to eliminate from Japanese minds, even today. The spread of *kokutai* ideology in teaching for so many years significantly limited the import and introduction of Western thought and innovations that could have helped to build an innovative and forward-looking foreign language education in Japan (Miller, 1982: 95).

Soon after 1945, the space left after the disappearance of *kokutai* was filled by a new ideology. By the early 1950s nationalism had begun to re-emerge together with the demands to revive ethics courses at schools and to formulate a

substitute for the Imperial Rescript on Education (Yoshino, 1992: 206). During the 1950s credits for "Studies in Moral Education" became a compulsory requirement for Japanese students who aspired to obtain a teaching certificate (Luhmer, 1990: 177). Gradually, a group of Japanese scholars under the direction of Hisamatsu (the author of *Kokutai no Hongi*) began to reuse the concepts of *kokutai* rebuilding them into the foundation of what later developed into an ideology of cultural nationalism known as *nihonjinron* (Yoshino, 1992: 219-20; Dale, 1986: 49; Miller, 1982: 95-6).

Cultural nationalism: the nihonjinron ideology

This section will summarize the history and main characteristics of the *nihonjinron* ideology followed by a short analysis of the *yakudoku* method of learning English (訳読, 訳 – *yaku* – translation and 読 – *doku* – reading), which is one of the ways in which this ideology manifests itself in the language classroom. The end of this section will examine the impact of the *nihonjinron* ideology on English language education in Japanese schools.

Summary of *nihonjinron*

By the early 1950s the space left after the disappearance of *kokutai* began to be filled by the cultural nationalism ideology known as *nihonjinron*. The term *nihonjinron* means "discussions of the Japanese" and refers to the substantial corpus of literary and academic works dealing with the debate on Japanese identity and attempts to define the uniqueness of Japanese culture (Dale, 1986: 14; Kubota, 1998: 299-300). In an effort to define that uniqueness the authors draw on

Japanese culture, science, historical chronicles, folklore, the origin and structure of Japanese language, and analysis of contemporary events.

Yoshino (1992) explains *nihonjinron* as a mode of thought that developed in Japan throughout the 1970s and 1980s. He groups his explanations into four categories. First, the *nihonjinron* can be viewed as an effort to challenge the predominant Westernization, which had restricted and threatened the Japanese expression of identity. It is a way to demonstrate the essence of Japanese culture, society and national character. Works of *nihonjinron* symbolize a border between "us" (Japanese) and "them" (Westerners) (Yoshino, 1992: 186). Second, *nihonjiron* can be regarded as an attempt to explain Japanese economic success in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of Japanese culture and national character. By "national character" the author means "traditional Japanese qualities" such as loyalty, consensus, filial piety and social organization based on vertical dependence. Economic success and the prevention of social problems such as a high rate of unemployment and crime are viewed as a Japanese moral victory and cultural achievement (ibid.: 189). Third, works belonging to *nihonjinron* category are supposed to serve as a dominant ideology that stabilizes Japanese society. They protect Japan's foundation and establishment. Many traditional values were neglected during a long period of modernization when Japan admired the West. Consequently, works of *nihonjinron* undertake the task of re-evaluating and re-establishing those essential features of Japanese into Japanese society (ibid.: 191-2). Fourth, there is also an explanation of *nihonjinron* literature in terms of

Japanese culture itself. Namely, it allows Japanese people to compare, reflect upon and evaluate their own group by looking at groups other than their own as a reference. According to the *nihonjinron* authors, this tendency and need to compare and evaluate own group in relation to the out-group has its prototype in the traditional social unit of the Japanese village community. Traditional villagers living in relatively isolated populations were always very eager to acquire any information about the outside world and to use it as a reference in reflection about their own communities (ibid.: 197-9).

In conclusion, Yoshino evaluates every explanation of *nihonjinron* with mild criticism but also states that those works have justifiable arguments from the point of view of the "thinking elites' who produced them (Yoshino, 1992: 200). In his opinion, *nihonjinron* writings produced by these "thinking elites" affect not only Japanese academics and intellectuals but also viewpoints of average people who try to apply its ideologies in everyday life (ibid.: 201). Yoshino states that cultural nationalism forms an integral part of every modern society and the Japanese version of it is not necessarily stronger than any other nationalism in various other countries. He views *nihonjinron* as an intellectual manifestation of contemporary Japanese nationalism, which serves as a guard against foreign influence and helps to maintain the distinctiveness of local culture. However, the author recognizes that it can also become a source of oppression since through intensive emphasis on national identity and uniqueness it can substantially affect Japanese international exchange and agreement (ibid.: 3, 226).

By contrast, Dale's (1986) *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* presents a sharply critical evaluation of the *nihonjinron* works. Dale examined the *nihonjinron* works produced by a large group of Japanese anthropologists, linguists, economists, scientists and philosophers, who tried to define the phenomenon of Japanese uniqueness. He characterizes that literature as " works of cultural nationalism concerned with ostensible 'uniqueness' of Japan in any aspect, and which are hostile to both individual experience and the notion of internal socio-historical diversity" (Dale, 1986: Introduction). Regardless, Dale stresses that works of *nihonjinron* cannot be underestimated since they have often succeeded in establishing themselves as the authentically indigenous view of Japanese realities and are often negatively cited in foreign publications. Nevertheless, the tendency to oppose Japanese uniqueness to other cultures is viewed by the author as unscientific and absurd. The contrast procedure is extremely misleading and unreliable since the authors are subjective and prejudiced when studying Western civilization but present soft, moderate views to interpret Japanese realities. Dale concludes that *nihonjinron* "fulfills all the criteria of the system of totalitarian thought; namely, it is accepted completely as a closed system of ideas; it treats outside cultures with disapproval and lacks humbleness in the presence of empirical proof". Although it denies any connections with politics and ideology, the *nihonjinron* works represent a wide range of ideas of nationalism, which have "a considerable impact on the way Japanese culture is perceived and discussed, both in Japan and abroad" (Dale, 1986: 9, 30-9, 52-3, 141).

Nihonjinron ideology as a continuation of the former, pre-war Japanese nationalistic principles developed into a way to channel cultural and ethnic sentiments. For those who accept it, it influences Japanese views of themselves and their relations with the outside world. It is a revolt against all Western ideas introduced during the previous epochs of modernization, since the image of the West presented in its works is mostly negative. It attempts to specify Japanese identity referring to all Japanese things as unusual, unique, different and the only one of its kind. In so doing, *nihonjinron* literature tends to reject any resemblance between Japanese and foreign culture and focuses on differences and Japanese distinctiveness giving it an original interpretation and explanation (Dale, 1986: 7, 14-5, 25).

Alongside recent educational reform efforts there are numerous attempts by many authors of the *nihonjinron* literature to analyze and influence views about English education in Japan and its course of changes. Among them, a respected linguist, Takao Suzuki, has written a best-seller *Nihonjin wa naze eigo ga dekinai ka* (日本人はなぜ英語ができないか。Why Can't the Japanese Speak English) published in 1999. Suzuki insists that there is no need to change the status of English language courses from an elective to a compulsory subject at schools. He claims that the idea that all Japanese should be able to speak English is a misunderstanding and that internalizing English language results in a remodeling of Japanese way of thinking and set of values and is a sort of "colonization of

Japanese self"(自己植民地化 – *jiko shokumin chika*). Suzuki strongly criticizes the ongoing reform strategy, which aims to modify the existing English education to prepare Japanese to deal with the need for English in an increasingly globalized environment. Instead of indiscriminately force-feeding students a uniform program of English language at schools, Suzuki maintains that Japanese authorities should develop a more varied program for those who are interested in working with it in the future and those who are not. Furthermore, the author stresses that English language education should not be a channel only for importing foreign ideas, but also for transmitting ideas from Japan to the rest of the world. In this way, English education should above all foster students who can describe Japan's distinctive cultural and historical circumstances to the world. According to the author, Americans and other Western nations constantly push Japan to change, adapt to global standards, and fit the "homogenous" Western world. He warns that this process will end in Japan becoming a "small America" and will come at a very high economic and emotional cost for Japanese people ending in a massive loss of Japaneseness (Suzuki, 1999: 145, 159).

Even more startling are Suzuki's views about the attitudes of Japanese people toward the English language itself. According to him, Japanese people have a deep feeling of respect and *akogare* (憧れ, admiration) for English language and Westerners. Since the Meiji period, when many scholars who learned foreign languages were able to introduce Western ideas and achievements to the Japanese

people, foreign languages gained a superior status in Japan in contrast to Japanese language, which was often considered not advantageous and ineffective (Suzuki, 1999: 17). Envy and admiration for the elite who can master the foreign language, combined with the feeling of inferiority about Japanese language, is responsible for the unreserved admiration that Japanese people have for English. Such *nihonjinron* speculations evidently remain popular among many quarters in Japan. In a time of intensive debate about educational reform this kind of writing forms a considerable part of Japanese publications. The influence it has on Japanese attitudes toward reform cannot be underestimated.

The *yakudoku* method of learning

One of the views of *nihonjinron* identifies schools as the most important agent for spreading the ideas of cultural nationalism and national distinctiveness throughout the society. Consequently, teachers play an important role in diffusing the *nihonjinron* ideas formulated by the intellectuals (Yoshino, 1992: 141). During the Meiji era, the school system was used to promote Japanese nationalism and emperor worship. Today, in the same way, the Japanese educational system conveys the ideology of Japaneseness *(nihonjinron),* while permitting learning about the achievements of foreign countries, but with the so-called "Japanese spirit" remaining intact. Too much exposure to other forms of thought is viewed by the Japanese Ministry of Education as dangerous. One of the outcomes of keeping the "Japanese spirit" intact is the belief that the Japanese have to learn foreign languages through their own language so as to match their perception strategies

(LoCastro, 1996: 48-9). The *yakudoku* method is a perfect example of this. This method is deeply embedded in the perception that Japanese people process information and messages differently from other people. During *yakudoku* translation, the words in the English sentence are translated word-for-word and mentally rearranged and put into Japanese word order (subject-object-verb) for the meaning to be grasped. It is often said that the use of the *yakudoku* method has a permanent negative influence on Japanese learners of English (ibid.: 51-2).

The influence of *nihonjinron* on English language education

Some authors (e.g., Suzuki, 1999: 143-159; Kubota, 1998: 298; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1990: 399) argue that Japanese exposed to the *nihonjinron* ideology may show deep frustration and insecurity when attempting to learn English. Contrary to the *yakudoku* principles of learning, which stress preserving an intact Japanese spirit, some *nihonjiron* voices also maintain that in order to acquire a certain level of proficiency and be able to communicate properly in English, students require a certain amount of cultural transfusion of Western values. Unfortunately, that transfusion consists mostly of *nihonjinron* type explanations of cultural differences. Consequently, Japanese students are encouraged to accept as true that to become able to speak and communicate in English they have to be more outgoing, individualistic and aggressive, in other words to think and act like an English native speaker. A perfect example of this viewpoint can be found in Suzuki's (1999) book. The author explains that proposed English language reforms threaten the Japanese sense of "self" and emotional stability and should, therefore, be once

more carefully looked at and reassessed by the Japanese authorities. The author warns that communication-oriented methods and introducing more and more native speaker assistant language teachers will come with the transmission and dissemination of a certain amount of American social values, relationships values, style of being, style of action and way of viewing the world. According to Suzuki, behind the Japanese students' desire to become able to speak English there is a strong feeling of admiration for the white Westerners, specifically Americans, who are perceived as very individualistic and straightforward. Consequently, foreign teachers overwhelm and intimidate Japanese students in the classroom, as a result affecting their attitude and pressing them to change (Suzuki, 1999: 143-148). For the Japanese whose study of English is associated with such *nihonjinron* type ideologies the outcome may be quite damaging. Since they are provided with a fixed and narrow image of the outside world and persuaded that the differences between them and people from the Western culture are deep, they come to believe that only the most formal and distant communication is possible. Other authors (e.g, Befu, 1983) argue that what is true about the influence of *nihonjinron* on English language learning is also true when it comes to the association of the Japanese with foreign residents in Japan and among them with native English language teachers. Foreigners (in Japanese called *gaijin,* 外人, "outsider") in Japan are considered "outsiders" no matter how many generations they have lived in Japan and how well they have adapted to the Japanese culture. In the eyes of Japanese, acquiring linguistic competence in Japanese language and cultural skills

by a foreigner does not welcome him/her into the ranks of Japanese society, but simply "moves him from a category of plain *gaijin* to the category of *henna gaijin* (peculiar, unusual foreigner)" (Befu, 1983: 244). The term *gaijin* symbolizes the foreigners' permanent outside status and through this helps to emphasize and maintain the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Japanese social group. English language teachers, therefore, from the very beginning of their work in Japanese schools, are the victims of mutual misunderstanding. While teaching English their desire is to introduce Japanese students to Western culture and minimize the distinction between them and the Japanese, whereas for the Japanese the study of foreign language encourages them to draw a sharper line between themselves and the foreigners. Although the Courses of Study issued by *Monbushō* proclaim the willingness to embark on internationalization and globalization, the support given to *nihonjinron* by the same government, politicians and mass media serves to create psychological barriers, which are invisible but effective in preventing major changes in English language educational strategy.

The sense of self in Japanese culture

Further cultural factors that can be considered to influence English language teaching and learning are the ideas surrounding the concept of selfhood and individualism. This part of the thesis will explain the development of the Japanese sense of self as well as implications of this sense of selfhood for the communicative English teaching and learning.

The development of self

Rather than being subsumed in the group, Japanese people possess a very clear sense of self, which is embedded in a complex and multi-faceted system of human relationships. From earliest childhood a person's self is formed and built of this network of personal relations with others. The process of socialization produces, therefore, a self that is particularly dependent on the attitudes and expectations of others, making the individual highly sensitive to evaluation and critique (Befu & Gunning, 1990: 5-6; Smith 1983: 89-90). The socializing process of preschool-age children in Japan occurs at home, in the neighborhood and in the pre-school or day nursery, which are supplementary institutions for home education for several years before entering school. They are a very important part of social education offering a chance to develop elements and dimensions of self, difficult to nurture only at home. They provide introductory knowledge and training in peer interactions and cooperation within the larger group. Children are taught that the world is full of people similar to them whose needs are equally important. Pre-school institutions in Japan give children the possibility to move beyond the limits of motherly influence and family, and to learn and incorporate the dual selfhood of complementary *omote* (表, front, public side of self) and *ura* (裏, back, private side of self), *uchi* (内, inside) and *soto* (外, outside) and *tatemae* (建前, public behavior) and *honne* (本音, unrestrained human feelings) (Hendry, 1995: 42-3; 1986: 61-8; Tobin, 1992: 21-32).

Omote represents the "front" "official" side of self, or that, which is presented to the outside world. Through participation in formal, ceremonial, highly planned, ordered and controlled group activities during pre-school, elementary and high school, children learn and come to understand the *omote* part of self. On the other hand, at home as well as through informal, free and spontaneous activities at educational institutions, they experience the *ura*, "back", private side of self that is exposed only to the closest family and friends (Tobin, 1992: 32-7).

The distinction between *uchi* and *soto* is another of the earliest concepts introduced to Japanese children. *Uchi* refers to the inside of the house and represents the members of the household and the ideas connected with the family or closest peers in one's group, as opposed to *soto*, which refers to outside and represents the outside world and people outside of the group to which one belongs. This distinction contributes enormously to creating a strong bond among members of the same group. These ideas accompany Japanese people all their lives since at school or at work they are members of institutions that are both *uchi* when it comes to spontaneous, after-work activities within one's group and *soto* when taking part in formal rituals, ceremonies or meetings (Hendry, 1995: 43-5; Tobin, 1992: 31; Smith, 1983: 94-5).

The concepts of *tatemae* and *honne* are another way of distinguishing between inside and outside. Children encounter these values very early by observing the different behavior of their parents and other members of the household inside and outside the house. *Tatemae*, or public behavior, is usually

constituted of polite language adjusted to the situation and reserved, undemonstrative, conventional rules of communication, while *honne* represents candid, unrestrained human feelings. This distinction is applied gradually during the child's education teaching him how to recognize *uchi* and *soto* relations and how to adjust his behavior to the given circumstances. By properly distinguishing the type of relationship and choosing the appropriate manners one proves that he is able to successfully maintain harmony and perform his social role (Hendry, 1995: 45-6; Tobin, 1992: 25-8).

This ability to distinguish different levels of relationships with people from inside and outside of one's group is called *kejime* (けじめ). *Kejime* connects and defines self in the society. It indicates how much discipline, submission, emotion and self-expression is appropriate in a given situation and in this way is essential to the smooth existence of self within the society (Hendry, 1995: 46; Bachnik, 1992: 153-6; Tobin, 1992: 24). In a social context, Japanese are very cautious with this interactional self, which can be enhanced or damaged through social interaction. Self's performance (世間体, *sekentei*) is continuously endorsed by the audience (世間, *seken*), which consists of the people outside the immediate family and includes friends, colleagues, schoolmates or other unknown people. The audience's sanctions are unavoidable, and for this reason Japanese make every effort to achieve *seken-nami* (世間並み), which is a traditionally accepted, conventional, standard or ordinary behavior (Lebra, 1992: 106-7).

Implications of the concept of self for communicative language teaching and learning

The understanding and proper development of *kejime* ability in a Japanese child is essential for smooth social interactions. Although Japanese teachers and students aim to achieve communicative competence in English, and even to become bilingual, they remain predominantly monolingual and monocultural. Priority of developing one's relationship with others over self-development is constantly emphasized resulting in a preference for self-discipline over spontaneity in social life. Communicative Language Teaching necessarily involves oral participation in the target language by the student. This approach requires the student to be active and spontaneous during the English language lesson, asking questions, responding, and appropriately using the language. A language teacher has to present a near native proficiency in English and take the role of an assistant and helper to a student rather than a knower of all information (Li, 1998: 679, 683). However, when teacher and students meet together in a Japanese classroom, they take up various culturally, historically and socially determined hierarchical positions. The primary role of the teacher as an authority who holds the knowledge is to transmit it to the students. The teacher's ability to answer all students' questions promptly is highly valued and important for his/her *soto* image in front of the class. Poor language proficiency and lack of confidence causes teachers to prefer to use Japanese in the classroom and to avoid a possible loss of face. Consequently, the teachers feel comfortable within the grammar-translation approach since it does not

require a high competency in spoken English. The teacher's goal is only to implement the *Monbushō* curriculum exactly as presented in the textbook; consequently, knowledge of the content is all that is needed (LoCastro, 1996: 49-54; Koike & Tanaka, 1995: 23-4).

Japanese people feel comfortable within their group and uneasy outside it. A Western teacher is viewed as an out-group member (a *soto* person) and treated with respect and distance. Furthermore, foreign English teachers might find it difficult to engage Japanese students in spontaneous interaction since Japanese communicative strategies involve distinguishing between *tatemae*, restrained in-class performance, where expression of individual opinion is avoided and *honne*, unrestrained real feelings, which are not publicly shown. *Kejime* ability allows Japanese students to acknowledge that every instance of their self-expression is possible only through someone else's self-restraint. Consequently, students function in a network of restrictions, which by Western standards look like limited opportunities for self-expression. Japanese students adjust to a certain level of politeness toward the foreign teacher and distance themselves to maintain the distinction. The use of polite language and the distance created between the pupils and the instructor in a classroom makes it possible to maintain a certain formal order and shows the *kejime* ability of the students. When it comes to the JET program, the flip side of the strict distinction between inside *(uchi)* and outside *(soto)* is that the Assistant Language Teachers are only superficially integrated into the social environment at their schools. Approximately 15-20 percent of JET

participants have teaching credentials or teaching experience prior to coming to Japan. Nevertheless, their teaching talents are not utilized in any special way since they are given the same role as those without any teaching skills or experience. They are also most often excluded from the decisions affecting the over-all English curriculum at their schools. Even though in some cases the ALTs may be used effectively in the language classroom, they are usually kept at a distance since as "outsiders" they are assumed to be unaware of many of the delicate nuances that are so important for the smooth functioning within the Japanese social group (McConnell, 2000: 222-4)

Japanese perception of returnee children – kikokushijo

In this chapter I have described some cultural and ideological factors affecting the behavior of Japanese teachers and learners in the language classroom and their attitude toward English language. This behavior and attitude is further shown in practice through Japanese people's treatment of returnee children. This treatment reflects to a considerable degree their views about foreigners and foreign language education. This section will define the concept of returnee children; describe the research on returnee schools and attendant cultural and educational problems that these children face upon their return to Japan. Lastly, this section analyzes the present situation of *kikokushijo* in Japan and their influence and role in English language teaching.

Definition of *kikokushijo* and returnee schools

The term kikokushijo refers to children under the age of twenty (which is university entrance age) who, because their parents lived overseas for longer than three months, have received their education at an overseas school and have then returned to Japan and entered a Japanese school. The parents of *kikokushijo* went abroad with the intention of returning at some point. Children who are born abroad and whose parents are members of local Japanese communities and raise their children in Japanese customs and language are also considered *kikokushijo* when their parents return to Japan. Japanese children abroad may attend *genchikō* (現地校, local schools), *kokusaigakkō* (国際学校, international schools), *hoshūkō* (補習校, supplementary Japanese schools that meet once a week), or *nihonjingakkō* (日本人学校, full-time Japanese schools). Regardless of what type of school they attend abroad, all are considered *kikokushijo* when they return to Japan and continue their education enrolling in the Japanese education system (Goodman, 1990: 10-5).

Official statistics on *kikokushijo,* kept since 1971, show that their number increased nearly sixfold during the 1970s and 1980s (Goodman, 1990: table V, 41). After their return to Japan about 50% of them attend *ukeirekō* (受入校, reception schools), which are part of a special education system for returnee children. These schools are supported by local and central government and have responded to the

fears[10] of parents of returnee children by establishing reentry and reintegration programs. *Ukeireko* can be elementary, middle or senior, national, public or private. Some of them simply mix the returnee children with the others or they may have separate adjustment programs for them. They do not attempt to assimilate the returnee children into Japanese culture but they try to create a safe atmosphere for them to restart their life in Japan and to bring together their 'Japaneseness' and their international experiences. In 1988 about 640 schools were specifically assigned by local education authorities to become *ukeireko* and to accept returnee children (Goodman, 1990: 185; White, 1987: 175).

Cultural and educational problems of returnee children

The increasing number of returnee children reentering the Japanese educational system causes an inconsistency in a fixed and secure school environment. They are perceived as 'un-Japanese' Japanese and their behavior and use of language is considered different from those of 'normal' Japanese (Yoshino, 1992: 128-9). The overseas experience of a Japanese child is viewed as exciting and interesting but also as very problematical. Over a period of time when Japanese children reside abroad, they are believed to become unlike children who grew up never leaving Japan. A quantity of culture learned while studying abroad is believed to be equal to the loss of Japaneseness. Any child who received a part of his/her education

[10] Parents are concerned about the "reverse culture shock" and their children's re-adaptation to Japanese culture, language and education system. This process in Japan can be particularly hard and severe and can result in bullying, frustration, alienation or even suicide or murder (Goodman, 1990: 56-7).

abroad is labeled *kaigaishijo* (海外子女, overseas child) and is thought to absorb to a certain extent a local foreign culture. *Kaigaishijo* try to find a balance between Japanese culture and foreign, local society. Their way of thinking, broad-based, multiracial and unprejudiced, about foreign languages and foreigners is distinctive and different from that held by the most Japanese (Goodman, 1990: 53-4).

Extremely ordered Japanese schools teach a great deal of self discipline and control in order to prepare the children to successfully perform their future roles in the hierarchical society of Japan. They produce hardworking Japanese with a cultural preference for harmony and uniformity. Returnee children are perceived as a serious threat to the fixed and rigid order of the Japanese educational system (Hendry, 1995: 107-8, 125). Upon their return to Japan and confrontation with Japanese society *kikokushijo* undergo a reverse culture shock and face serious problems. Many of them are unable to readapt to Japanese culture and language, which damages their reputation, marks them as 'different' and turns them into the victims of intensive bullying and teasing. These drastic reactions to the returnee children can be partially explained by the ideas of *nihonjinron,* which are widely disseminated and remain influential among large group of Japanese public (Goodman, 1990: 56-9).

The foreign experiences of *kikokushijo* often stand in complete opposition to the Japanese strict educational principles and are considered disorderly and disruptive. *Kikokushijo* frequently have problems adjusting to the school's rigid requirements, often have a poor comprehension of Japanese language, or cannot

read and write *kanji*. They lack the vocabulary to understand lessons and their absence from Japan also causes a lack of background knowledge needed for social study and history lessons (ibid.: 88-9). Additionally, the teachers in Japan, who usually teach classes of up to fifty pupils, are very poorly qualified to deal with returnee children. Those children's ability to speak English usually is far superior to that of the Japanese foreign language teachers. They are often labeled disruptive and troublemakers since *kikokushijo* may question teachers' methods and ability which makes the instructors extremely uncomfortable in front of the class.

Present situation of *kikokushijo* in Japan

Since the mid-1980s the image of returnee children began to change and they appear to have an increasingly prestigious status in the society, schools and companies. The National Council on Educational Reform in its report issued in 1987 discussed the returnee children under the rubric of reforms for coping with Japan's internationalization. The Council agreed that *kikokushijo* are a valuable and positive feature in Japanese society and that more help and special consideration should be provided for them to improve their position in the country (Goodman, 1990: 188). In most prestigious Japanese companies special measures were set to recruit *kikokushijo*. Corporations[11] recognized the need for more individualistic and creative workers and *kikokushijo*, seen as an example of such, are very much

[11] Among these corporations are the biggest and the most prestigious: Matsushita, Ricoh, Mitsubishi Bank and Mitsui Bank. In 1982 Matsushita Corporation announced that when hiring new employees it would give priority to children of their employees posted overseas (Goodman, 1990: 184).

appreciated. Furthermore, since *kikokushijo* are now perceived by more and more Japanese as Japan's international elite, schools that were designated to accept returnee children have become increasingly attractive to parents of children who have not lived abroad. *Ukeireko* schools are helped with increasing investment from the central government and are encouraged to concentrate more on developing international qualities and skills of returnee children rather than on readapting them to the mainstream society (ibid: 227-31).

Role of *kikokushijo* in English language teaching

Returnee children in Japan find themselves in the middle, between Japan and the outside world. Despite the recent elevation in their status, and increased financial support for *ukeireko* schools, attitudes towards returnee children remain very ambivalent. Some consider them to be dangerous to the established, harmonious and rigorous educational system, while others appreciate their overseas experience not unlike the attitudes generally held towards foreigners in Japan (Hendry, 1995: 125).

On the whole, foreign educational experiences of *kikokushijo* stand in contrast to the principles transmitted in Japanese schools. During their stay abroad they are believed to lose a part of their Japaneseness, consequently becoming a *soto* person (outsider) (White, 1987: 175). Therefore, *kikokushijo* are often considered individualistic, disruptive and difficult to handle by the teachers since they can question their teaching methods and additionally, during English lessons,

demonstrate language ability superior to that of the Japanese foreign language teachers (Goodman, 1990: 88-91).

Moreover, communicative linguistic abilities of *kikokushijo* are often not valued for the reason that the language teaching methods at Japanese schools are for the most part still grammar-translation oriented. A special section of the 1985 *Monbushō* Report was dedicated to government measures regarding the returnee children. The authors tried to find a compromise between readaptation of *kikokushijo* to the Japanese educational system and the maintenance of their foreign linguistic and cultural skills. The Report stated clearly that the language skills acquired by the *kikokushijo* overseas could be of great benefit to their peers in Japanese schools as well as to their English language teachers. The Report, however, did not go further to recommend bilingual education despite the encouragement for this idea given from the then education minister Michio Nagai (Goodman, 1990: 207).

Inoguchi Takashi, a professor at the University of Tokyo, blames the ambivalent attitude toward *kokokushijo* on the so-called "Nagasaki Dejima complex" (Inoguchi, 1999: 9). During the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), the island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor was the single post where Dutch were allowed to reside and trade. Only a small number of Japanese, who learned the language and were able to communicate with the Western "barbarians", were allowed to contact, translate and deal with the Dutch settlers in Dejima (Tubielewicz, 1984: 286). According to Inoguchi, civil servants fluent in foreign languages are still

appointed a lower status in the bureaucracy when compared to top-ranking bureaucrats. The nation's bureaucratic elite, who is still a main pacesetter in Japan, is so far not expected to be able to use foreign languages but to rely on the lower personnel to take care of interpretation and translation (Inoguchi, 1999: 9-10). Although this may be considered an extreme point of view, the truth remains that returnee children are still pressured by teachers and peers to lose the acquired foreign behavioral styles and, as a result, are frequently forced to keep a low profile about their experiences abroad. While *Monbushō* repeatedly stresses the importance of globalization and internationalization and as a result the necessity for improving English language education, the ambivalent attitude towards the overseas experience of the returnee children continues to afflict them.

Conclusions

In this chapter I presented a cultural and ideological framework of English language education in Japanese public junior and senior high schools. I assumed that the recognized and described issues in teaching English as a foreign language have a significant influence on the language learning and teaching methods as well as on the implementation of communicative techniques in the curriculum. Ideological and cultural aspects influencing English language education that have emerged from my study can be summarized as follows. First, Confucianism and succeeding ideologies of *kokutai* and *nihonjinron* have strongly been influencing and shaping the Japanese educational system since the Tokugawa period. Their presence significantly affected the formation of the institutional framework of

Japanese education and contributed to the centralized control of the Ministry of Education over a uniform school curriculum. These ideologies limited attempted democratic changes and contributed to adherence to traditional ethical values, cultivation of national identity, *kokoro* and character development in education. This further contributed to an entrance examination oriented, ordered, disciplined language classroom where the teacher is treated as an authority and provider of knowledge while students learn through attentive listening without verbal participation. What is more, the considerable influence of *nihonjinron* on Japanese education and behavior resulted in such outcomes as the *yakudoku* method of teaching English and deferential treatment of native English speakers. Second, the Japanese sense of self embedded in a complex system of human relationships, contributes to a lack of openness and spontaneity in the classroom, as well as to reserved treatment of foreign language teachers.

A new drive toward educational reforms, stimulated by the ongoing globalization and technical changes, stands in contrast to the preservation of Confucian values and the extensive emphasis placed on the development of *kokoro* in Japan's schooling. The concern and anxiety of Japanese educational authorities has grown steadily as the necessity to acquire practical knowledge such as Internet and computer literacy, practical English language competence and debating skills became obvious. The serious problem with the conflict between the present educational policy and the needs for reforms comes from the fact that the

traditional ethical values present in Japanese education today are deeply rooted in Japanese culture and are therefore hard to remove or to reform.

In the final part of my research questionnaires were devised to assess if these cultural and ideological features reveal themselves in Japanese teachers' and students' attitudes toward English education, experiences with English language learning and views about English education reforms. The explanation for the choice of questions and discussion of the answers to the questionnaires are presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four

Questionnaires Analysis

Goals of the questionnaires

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of the pilot survey conducted among Japanese English teachers and students. Two questionnaires were designed, one for teachers and another for students. The purpose of the questionnaires was to collect data from the experiences of teachers and learners about the teaching and learning of English which would, in turn, help to assess the presence in Japanese English education and their influence on teachers and students of institutional, cultural and ideological aspects described in Chapters Two and Three. Questions in the questionnaires for both groups of respondents were divided into five parts, which gathered data about: 1) professional background, 2) attitudes toward English language and education, 3) linguistic aspects, 4) experience in English learning, and 5) opinions about the planned English educational reforms. In total 26 participants answered my questionnaires: 13 Japanese English teachers and 13 Japanese students. The Ethics[12], Consent Form[13] and the questionnaires were approved by the Faculty of Arts Research Ethics Board (Review #AC02) before the questionnaires were administered.

The difficulty of finding possible participants for the survey and the accessibility of the Japanese exchange programs participants only during their

[12] For the Ethics Statement see Appendix A.
[13] For the Consent Form see Appendix B.

programs at the University of Alberta meant that my survey was conducted close to the beginning of my study. As this occurred before I could access some of the most recent acquisitions on teaching English in Japan, some of the institutional, cultural and ideological factors described in this thesis were not addressed in the questionnaire. Nevertheless, they help to present a fuller picture of background factors to be considered in reforms of English language education. Adherence to conservative methods of teaching and learning English and the influence of entrance examinations on English instruction were tested through questions about the participants' experiences with English language education and questions about the present state of English education. They were asked: 1) if they and their English teacher used practical or spoken English in the language classroom, 2) if their English language classes were grammar-translation and teacher-centered, 3) if students had any influence on the choice of teaching materials and assessment procedures used by the teachers, 4) what were their main reasons to study English in senior high school, 5) if their textbooks supported in any way the development of communication skills and cultural knowledge and 6) if teachers and students had a chance to study with an ALT who was actively participating in the language classroom. Moreover, to explore the impact of teacher training on the teaching and learning of English, participants were asked to express their opinion about Japanese teachers' English language ability. Subsequently, teachers and students were asked to conclude what aspects of learning English were difficult for them and students were asked to assess their language ability after graduating from senior high school

English courses. The last part of the questionnaire was composed of questions about English language reforms. Participants were asked if they consider current methods of teaching and learning English successful and effective, and whether they think that these methods need to be reformed. Furthermore, in open questions, teachers and students were asked to express their opinions about the English curriculum they followed while teaching and learning and about the new communication-oriented English curriculum proposed by *Monbushō*.

The questions about teacher-centeredness, students' active, spontaneous verbal participation, and orientation on grammar-translation and entrance examinations were useful in investigating the influence of the institutional framework of English education, but equally valuable in exploring the presence of cultural and ideological issues in the language classroom, which form the so-called "Japanese communicative style". Furthermore, I checked the attitude toward the English language and toward native English teachers by asking participants if they think that it is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English, and if they were willing to study English and interact with native teachers who taught at their schools. In my thesis, when analyzing the influence of *nihonjinron* ideology and literature on Japanese students and teachers of English, I referred to a recent publication of linguist Takao Suzuki entitled *Nihonjin-wa Naze Eigo-ga Dekinai ka* (日本人はなぜ英語ができないか。Why Can't the Japanese Speak English?). Suzuki maintained that Japanese people who study English approach English

language and white Westerners with a deep feeling of *akogare* (憧れ, respect and admiration). In my survey, I tried to further examine these assumptions by asking detailed questions about the attitude with which Japanese people approach English native speakers, European native language speakers and Asian native language speakers.

Taishukan (大修館) *questionnaire*[14]

I also evaluate an online questionnaire assembled and prepared by the Japanese publishing company *Taishukan*. This opinion poll covered some areas very relevant to my research and resulted in 13 times more responses than my exploratory survey. I chose, therefore, to include its results as a valuable addition and enhancement to my research. Consequently, in this chapter I compare and weigh the answers obtained through my questionnaire with the relevant ones from the *Taishukan* poll.

Taishukan is one of the largest publishing companies in Japan, which, among other titles, releases numerous books on English education, team teaching for Japanese and Assistant (foreign) English Language Teachers, various English textbooks and dictionaries. The *Taishukan* survey was conducted between 1 January 2001 and 20 March 2002 as part of the online discussion on the company's website about the planned English language educational reforms in Japan. Three hundred and fifty-seven participants responded: 136 students, 88 elementary, junior

[14] See Appendix G and H for Japanese and English versions of the Taishukan questionnaire, together with the compilation of the results.

and high school teachers, 42 university teachers and researchers and 90 office workers and public service officials (*Taishukan, 2001,* electronic document). Participants were asked in 11 questions to present their opinions about: a) English language education in Japan, b) the introduction of English at an early stage of school education, and c) the necessity of English language for Japanese people.

Description of the sample

The questionnaire for Japanese teachers[15]

The questionnaire was conducted in two rounds: first, between 16 and 18 November 2001, among a group of instructors who came under the program Japan Ministry of Education (MEXT) – University of Alberta Intensive Teacher Training Program, and second, between 1 and 5 June 2002, among teachers who were part of the Hokkaido-Teachers of English Project (HTEP) also at the University of Alberta (for the detailed description of these programs see Chapter Two). The survey consisted of 37 questions. The examined group of 13 Japanese English teachers worked in schools of different levels. The division within the group was as follows:

Teachers teaching English at **elementary school**	**2** people
Teachers teaching English at **junior high school**	**5** people
Teachers teaching English at **senior high school**	**6** people

Table 2: Number of teachers working at different levels of Japanese high schools

[15] For the questionnaire for the Japanese teachers see Appendix C. For the results of this questionnaire see Appendix D.

The group also varied considerably with regard to the length of work experience and the size of schools and classes they worked with:

Work experience	**2** months – **18** years
School size	**18** students – **1200** students
Class size	**2** students – **40** students

Table 3: Work experience, school size and class size of Japanese teachers

Two teachers with the shortest teaching experience in the group (one of them with only two months and the second with two years) taught English at the elementary level and worked in very small schools (one with 28 students in total and the other with 18 students).

The questionnaire for Japanese students[16]

The questionnaire was conducted between 26 March and 6 April 2002. The sample consisted of 13 Japanese students who were studying at the University of Alberta. Seven people in the group were residing in Edmonton studying and paying tuition independently, four of the students were on exchange programs, but were not sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Education, and two of the participants came to the University on the officially sponsored *Monbukagakushō Haken Kokuhi Ryūgaku* (文部科学省 派遣 国費 留学, Ministry of Education National School Exchange Program).

The students' opinion poll consisted of 69 questions. Students' age, English language learning experience, years between which they attended Japanese

[16] For the questionnaire for Japanese students see Appendix E. For the results of this questionnaire see Appendix F.

junior and senior high schools and the size of schools and classes in which they studied English were as follows:

Age of the students (8 females and 5 males)	**19 – 33** years old
English language learning experience	**7 – 19** year of exper.
Years of attending junior high school	**1981 – 1998**
Years of attending senior high school	**1984 – 2001**
Number of students in jun. high school classroom	**25 – 40** students
Number of students in sen. high school classroom	**30 – 40** students
Number of students in total in junior high school	**160 – 960** students
Number of students in total in senior high school	**320 – 1500** students

Table 4: Age, length of language learning experience, school and class size of Japanese students

The students' questionnaire is 32 questions longer than the teachers' survey. It was conducted in March/April 2002, which was after the first round of the teachers' questionnaire (conducted on 16-18 November, 2001). After analyzing the first round of teachers' answers I decided to broaden the students' survey by adding supplementary questions to obtain more detailed answers. To acquire a fuller picture of current English language instruction in high schools I expanded the section about students' experiences in English learning adding questions about: 1) amount of hours of English instruction and English homework in junior and senior high school, 2) methods of teaching English they experienced in language classroom, 3) English textbooks they used, and 4) their reasons for studying English in senior high school. In the end of this section I additionally asked the students to assess their English language ability after completing senior high school English courses. As a result the students' survey became much longer.

Analysis of the questionnaire for Japanese teachers

This section addresses four parts of the questionnaire. Each section has a title corresponding to the title of the part of the teachers' questionnaire that it analyses.

Attitude toward English language and education

When asked whether it is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English, the opinions were very divided: four of the respondents agreed, four chose the neutral answer, three teachers disagreed and two even strongly disagreed. To a very similar question in the *Taishukan* survey[17] the responses and opinions were equally divided. Only 7.6 percent answered, "almost all Japanese should be able to communicate in English smoothly", a number of respondents stated that "it is not necessary", a little more than half, 57.1 percent, responded, "to be able to communicate smoothly when their work or research requires it". The teachers' opinions in this sample thus corresponded quite closely with those expressed in the general survey that there is not an absolute necessity for every Japanese to master English conversation. However, the majority of teachers responding to my questionnaire thought that English should be a compulsory subject in Japanese schools[18]. They stated that their students are willing to study English[19] and are willing to make contact with native speakers of English who teach at Japanese schools[20].

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[17] Question 4 of the *Taishukan* survey, "Up to what degree should an average Japanese master English language?".
[18] See Appendix D and the answers to question 6 (2 people strongly agreed and 6 agreed).
[19] See Appendix D and the answers to question 7 (1 person strongly agreed and 6 agreed).
[20] See Appendix D and the answers to question 8 (5 people strongly agreed and 4 agreed).

In questions 9 to 17 of my survey, I tried to explore the suppositions propagated in *nihonjinron* literature about the admiration (*akogare*) that Japanese learners feel toward English native language speakers. I asked detailed questions about the attitude with which Japanese people approach English native speakers, European native language speakers and Asian native language speakers. To questions regarding Asian native speakers, seven teachers responded neutrally and three disagreed when asked if Japanese people generally are *respectful* toward them[21], and seven chose neutral and five disagreed when asked if Japanese people generally *admire* Asian native speakers.[22] The suppositions were largely confirmed since the majority of teachers agreed that Japanese people are generally *respectful* toward English native speakers[23] and that they generally *admire* English native speakers.[24] Seven respondents agreed with the statement that Japanese people are generally *respectful* toward other European native speakers.[25]

Bearing in mind the diversity in school sizes, it was interesting that almost all the teachers responding to my questionnaire had the opportunity to team-teach with an Assistant Language Teacher.[26] Most of them stated that the ALTs had an influence on the practised English language curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom (i.e., were active participants in the language

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[21] See Appendix D and the answers to question 15.
[22] See Appendix D and the answers to question 16.
[23] See Appendix D and the answers to question 9 (1 strongly agreed and 11 agreed).
[24] See Appendix D and the answers to question 10 (9 agreed).
[25] See Appendix D and the answers to question 12.
[26] See Appendix D and the answers to question 19 (12 teachers responded yes and only one said no).

classroom).[27] The teachers overwhelmingly agreed that cultural knowledge of Japan is essential for the ALTs[28] and also that it is equally necessary for a Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of an English speaking country.[29] Most of the teachers interviewed in my survey also agreed that private English language conversation schools are helpful in improving English conversational ability.[30] The *Taishukan* poll included a comparable question: "What is the best place to learn English?". The largest part answered: school – 61.1 percent, and only 10.9 percent replied English conversational school. This may be due to the fact that only schools can provide English education relevant to the requirements of the entrance examination system and consequently appropriate for the further educational career. Conversational schools are therefore treated more like an extracurricular expansion of language knowledge.

Linguistic questions

The responses to the set of questions about specific aspects of English language learning revealed that Japanese people perceive every aspect of English language to be difficult to learn.[31] The responses to the detailed questions, which were

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[27] See Appendix D and the answers to question 20 (5 strongly agreed and 4 agreed).
[28] See Appendix D and the answers to question 21 (3 strongly agreed and 8 agreed).
[29] See Appendix D and the answers to question 18 (10 strongly agreed and 3 agreed).
[30] See Appendix D and the answers to question 22 (3 strongly agreed and 6 agreed).
[31] See Appendix D and the answers to question 23 (5 strongly agreed and 6 agreed).

specifically about the difficulties in mastering English grammar, writing, listening comprehension, pronunciation and conversation[32] are grouped in the charts below:

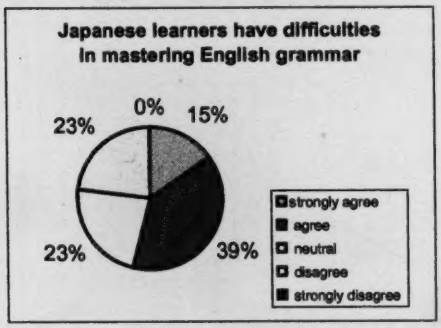

Fig. 1: Japanese teachers' opinions about difficulties in mastering English grammar.

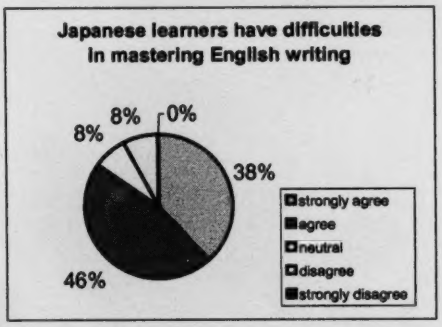

Fig. 2: Japanese teachers' opinions about difficulties in mastering English writing.

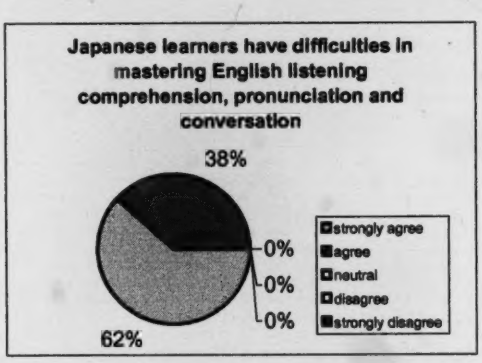

Fig. 3: Japanese teachers' opinions about difficulties in mastering English listening comprehension, pronunciation and conversation.

Experiences with English learning

The next part of the questionnaire examined teachers' previous high school experiences with English language learning. The answers confirmed a general

[32] See Appendix D and the answers to question 24-1, 24-2, 24-3, 24-4 and 24-5.

view of the Japanese high school English classroom described in the institutional and cultural part of my thesis, where the teacher focuses on grammar, explaining the content in Japanese, while students have little or no opportunity to actually speak and develop their communication skills. When asked if they used practically or spoke English during English lessons in high school seven teachers disagreed and six strongly disagreed.[33] When asked whether their high school English teacher spoke and used English in the classroom five people disagreed and six strongly disagreed.[34]

Questions about English educational reforms

The final part of the survey examined the teachers' general opinion about the condition and reforms of English language education in Japan. More than half of them concurred with the opinion that English teaching methods currently practised in Japan are grammar-translation oriented.[35] More than half of the teachers thought that those teaching methods are not successful and effective in producing students able to communicate in English.[36] Contrary to my results, in the *Taishukan* questionnaire when asked: "Do you think that your English competence is low" the largest part of people answered "no" – 44.8 percent versus "yes" – only 11.2 percent. This shows that differing from the teachers' views, a considerable part of *Taishukan* respondents thought that English education was effective at giving them

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[33] See Appendix D and the answers to question 25.
[34] See Appendix D and the answers to question 26.
[35] See Appendix D and the answers to question 27 (3 strongly agreed and 5 agreed).
[36] See Appendix D and the answers to question 28 (8 agreed, 3 were neutral and 2 disagreed).

a sufficient language competency. This may be due to the fact that my sample consisted only of English teachers who dealt with language teaching methods on the daily basis whereas the group of *Taishukan* respondents was very diverse and included people who have limited chances of using this language in everyday situations. A little more than half of the interviewed teachers were aware that the new English language curriculum addresses the need to improve communicative skills of students[37], but less than half of them claimed that there are already many changes introduced in current English textbooks to support the development of those skills[38] or that current textbooks introduce the racial variety of native speakers.[39] Additionally, only a little more than half of the teachers supported the idea of early English education and introducing lessons at the elementary school level[40], which is comparable with the respondents in the *Taishukan* poll to the question 6: "When should we start learning English?". The participants responded "from kindergarten" – 18.5 percent, "from elementary school" – 33.6 percent versus "from junior high school" – 40.1 percent. Likewise, in answer to question 7: "What do you think about the so-called 'early stage English education'?" 33.9

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[37] See Appendix D and the answers to question 29 (3 strongly agreed, 4 agreed).
[38] See Appendix D and the answers to question 30 (6 agreed but 5 were neutral and 2 disagreed).
[39] See Appendix D and the answers to question 31 (1 strongly agreed, 4 agreed but 5 were neutral and 3 disagreed).
[40] See Appendix D and the answers to question 33 (3 strongly agreed and 4 agreed but 5 were neutral).

percent of *Taishukan* poll participants supported it completely while 48.7 percent thought of it as problematic and did not agree with the idea.

The most conclusive answer from the interviewed instructors was to the statement that Japanese English teachers generally need to improve their language skills.[41] Their training process is mostly committed to covering grammar, translations, history and theory of English teaching and does not emphasize performance in English and development of communicative skills. Furthermore, in the final open questions part of the questionnaire, 9 out of 13 teachers pointed out the overwhelming influence of the entrance examination system on the practised methods of teaching and learning English at Japanese schools. They claimed that the examination system is the main factor determining the choice of the teaching materials and line of teaching, and thus there is not enough place left in the syllabus for other communication-oriented activities. Moreover, four teachers mentioned the JET program as a valuable addition to the English language school courses but also pointed out that ALTs have not yet found their way to small schools in many rural areas. Furthermore, Japanese teachers incompetent in English are often not prepared to fully make use of the native speaker assistants.

Analysis of the questionnaire for Japanese students

This section addresses four parts of the questionnaire. Each section's title corresponds to the title of the part of the students' questionnaire that is analyzed.

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[41] See Appendix D and the answers to question 32 (8 strongly agreed and 4 agreed).

Attitude toward English language education

When asked whether it is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English, students' opinions were very divided[42] but the majority concurred that English should be a compulsory subject at Japanese schools.[43] That coincides with the responses given by the teachers and by respondents to the *Taishukan* poll. It may lead to a conclusion that English is seen as a necessary component of the school curriculum since it is required for a successful educational career, but communicative competence is not perceived as a necessary skill. Many students declared that they were willing as junior and senior high school students to study English[44] and to make contact with native speakers. Similarly to the teachers' questionnaire, here, in questions number 12 to 20 I tried to verify assumptions rooted in the *nihonjinron* literature about the deferential attitude with which Japanese people approach English native speakers. The answers were for the most part similar to the ones obtained from the teachers, since half or more of the students agreed that Japanese people admire and are respectful toward English native speakers, but the majority of the participants disagreed when asked if they respect and admire other Asian native speakers.

Eight of the student participants had the opportunity to study with the help of an assistant language teacher but only four of them thought that the ALTs had

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[42] See Appendix F and the answers to question 6 (1 strongly agreed, 5 agreed but 2 were neutral, 3 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed).
[43] See Appendix F and the answers to question 7 (2 strongly agreed, 8 agreed).
[44] See Appendix F and the answers to question 8, 9, 10, 11.

influence on the practised English language curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom (i.e., actively contributed to the language lesson).[45] This opinion stands in contrast to the one held by the teachers since the majority of them stated that the ALT had an effect on the curriculum and methods. The divergence shows that the perception of effective use of the ALT in the language classroom may differ between teacher and learner. The majority of the students, like teachers, thought that it is necessary for a Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of an English speaking country[46] and for the ALT to experience Japanese culture.[47] The participants also responded that experience abroad is necessary for Japanese students of English.[48]

Linguistic questions

The answers to questions about English language revealed that not only Japanese English teachers but also students involved in this survey perceive English language as difficult to learn.[49] The responses to the detailed questions, which were specifically about the difficulties in mastering English grammar, writing, listening comprehension, pronunciation and conversation[50] are grouped in the charts below:

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[45] See Appendix F and the answers to question 23 and 24.
[46] See Appendix F and the answers to question 21.
[47] See Appendix F and the answers to question 25.
[48] See Appendix F and the answers to question 22.
[49] See Appendix F and the answers to question 27 (2 strongly agreed, 6 agreed).
[50] See Appendix F and the answers to question 28-1, 28-2, 28-3, 28-4 and 28-5.

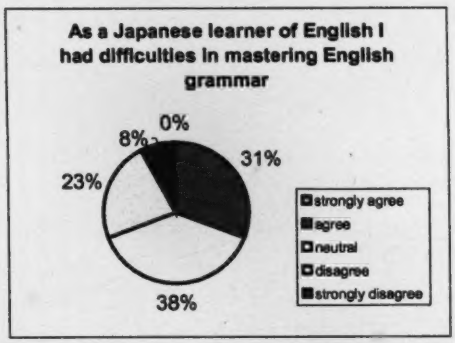

Fig. 4: Japanese students' opinions about difficulties in mastering English grammar.

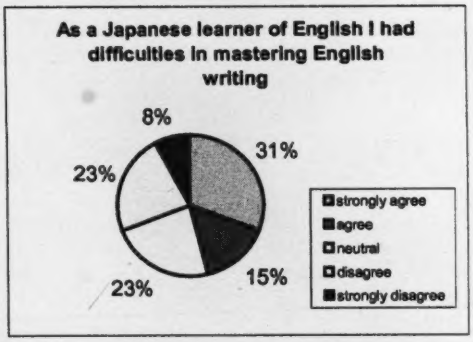

Fig. 5: Japanese students' opinions about difficulties in mastering English writing.

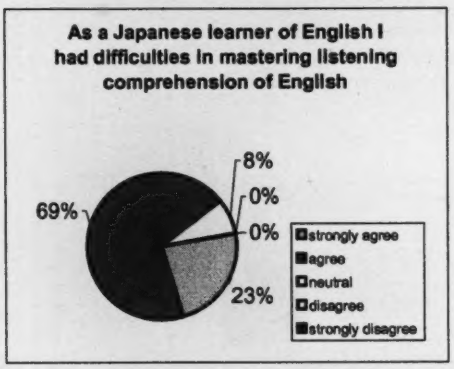

Fig. 6: Japanese students' opinions about difficulties in mastering listening comprehension of English.

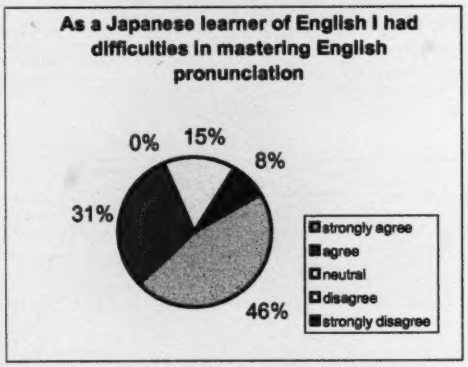

Fig. 7: Japanese students' opinions about difficulties in mastering English pronunciation.

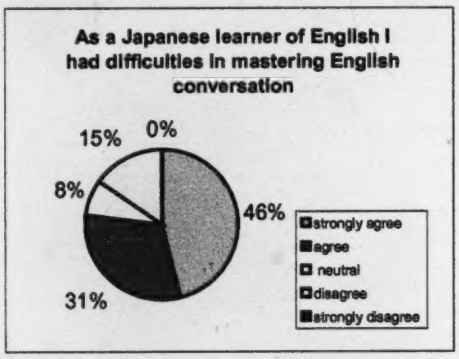

Fig. 8: Japanese students' opinions about difficulties in mastering English conversation.

Your experience in English learning

The next part of the questionnaire examined students' junior and senior high school experiences of English language learning. The amount of weekly English language school instruction and homework were as follows:

Hours of English instruction a week in junior high school	**2 – 5** hours
Hours of English instruction a week in senior high school	**3 – 8** hours
Time spent on English homework each week in jun.h.school	**1 – 6** hours
Time spent on English homework each week in sen.h.school	**1 – 10** hours

Table 5: Amount of students' weekly English instruction and homework in junior and senior high schools.

Similar to the teachers' answers, the students' responses indicated a general view of the teacher-centered high school English classroom where the instructors focus on grammar, while students do not get many chances to use the language and develop their communication skills. Most of the students declared that they did not use practical or spoken English during language lessons in junior and senior high schools[51] and that their junior and senior high school English teachers did not use English in the classroom.[52] Furthermore, the majority of the students stated that during English lessons most attention was paid to the learning of grammar rules and item-by-item vocabulary, that spontaneous answers and participation in the language classroom were extremely rare, and that they had little influence on the selection of the teaching materials and assessment procedures used by their English

[51] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 35 and 36.
[52] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 37 and 38.

teachers.[53] In addition, nearly everyone stated that high school English textbooks did not include any activities promoting the development of communication skills and more than half of the learners concluded that those textbooks also did not develop cultural knowledge or introduce the racial variety of native speakers.[54] Consequently, students did not assess highly their English skills after graduating from the English program in senior high school. Students' views about their understanding of spoken English, written English, their writing skills and communication skills after completing senior high school language courses are grouped in the charts below:

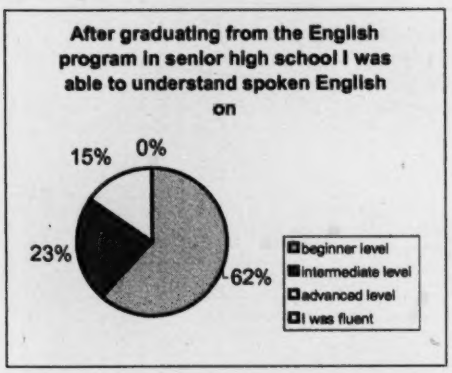

Fig. 9: Students' assessment of their understanding of spoken English after graduating from senior high school.

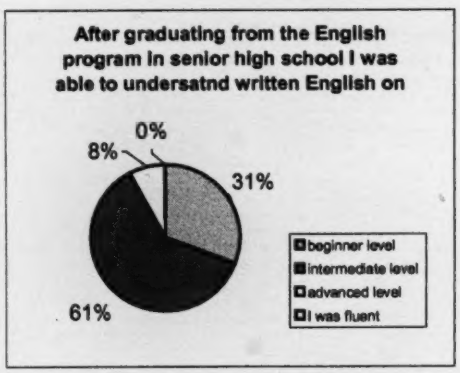

Fig. 10: Students' assessment of their understanding of written English after graduating from senior high school.

[53] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 41, 42, 43 and 44.
[54] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 48, 49 and 50.

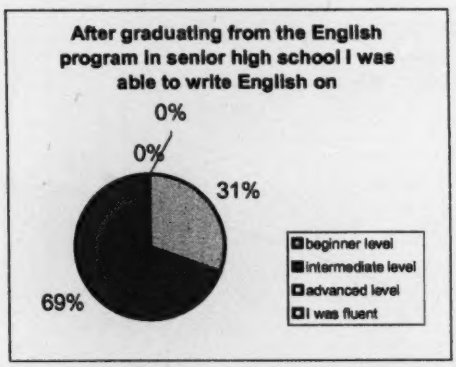

Fig. 11: Students' assessment of their ability o write in English after graduating from senior high school.

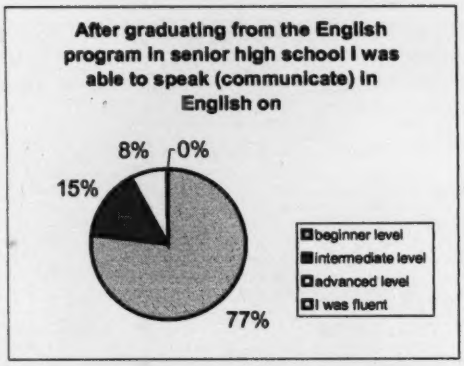

Fig. 12: Students' assessment of their ability to speak (communicate) in English after graduating from senior high school.

Surprisingly, only 5 students stated that their reason for studying English was to get prepared for the entrance examination to the university[55], which did not correspond with the distribution of the teachers' answers, given that 9 of 13 teachers claimed that preparation for the entrance examination is the primary purpose of English education and a major obstacle in the way of improving it. Among the main reasons for studying English at senior high school students stated: I wanted to learn English -5 people, I liked English language -4 people, and I realized that knowing English will increase my job opportunities -4 people.[56] Students' opinions regarding extracurricular English education were for the most part congruent with the teachers' answers; i.e., half stated that English language conversation schools and private English lessons are helpful in acquiring and improving conversational ability.[57]

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[55] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 45.
[56] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 46.
[57] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 39 and 40.

Questions about the present state of English education and English educational reforms

Responses of the students to this part of the questionnaire were congruent with those given by the teachers. More than half of the students thought that current English teaching methods are grammar-translation oriented and teacher centered.[58] When asked if the current English teaching methods are successful and effective, half of the group disagreed and what is more, the majority of the students declared that the methods need to be reformed.[59] Most of the students agreed that Japanese English language instructors need to improve their language skills.[60] Only one student was aware of the curriculum changes planned from April 2002. The majority of responses were neutral when asked if English should be introduced at the elementary level of education.[61]

Summary of the results

The questionnaires provided an insight into contemporary English language education in Japanese junior and senior high schools from the teachers' and students' perspectives. The survey was designed to explore the presence of issues described in Chapters Two and Three in English language education and their influence on English teachers and learners. Additionally, the questionnaire sought

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[58] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 51, 55 and 56.
[59] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 57, 58 and 60.
[60] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 63.
[61] See Appendix F and the answers to questions 64.

feedback on how Japanese people who went through the high school system of foreign language education assess their own proficiency in English.

The questionnaire answers supported the suggestion in Chapters Two and Three that institutional, cultural and ideological factors described in this thesis contribute to the formation of the conservative, rigid education system that is resistant to changes and that retains the traditional methods of English teaching and learning. For the teachers' responses at least, the curriculum was focused on preparation for the entrance examinations. Among student respondents, five mentioned the entrance examination as a main reason for studying English. The rest of the students liked and wanted to learn English, as well as understood that knowledge of this language will increase their job opportunities. This shows that although the entrance examination still remains one of the important factors determining English teaching, there are young people who study it for pleasure, personal fulfillment and understand its importance in obtaining a job in the age of internationalization and globalization.

Students' experiences in learning English corresponded to the teachers' outlook that for the most part English classes were teacher-centered and grammar-translation oriented. All of the teachers and the majority of students, when asked about their learning experiences, stated that they did not participate orally in the language classroom and that spontaneous answers were extremely rare. Furthermore, more that half of the teachers and the majority of students did not agree that English textbooks used by them included activities promoting the

development of communication skills and cultural knowledge. Most of the participants perceived this kind of education as not successful, not effective and stated that it needs to be reformed.

In my thesis I also suggested that Japanese English teachers working in junior and senior high schools are not trained in communicative language teaching and have not acquired adequate communicative skills in English. The most conclusive answers from the participants in my survey came to the statement about the Japanese English teachers' language abilities. Almost all participants agreed that the instructors did not use or speak English during their language lessons in high school and that teachers' language skills need to be improved. Since the communication-oriented foreign language teaching is based mainly on the teachers' near-native language proficiency, their poor level of spoken English is a key obstacle in the way of the reform process.

My survey showed that the participants were willing to study English and to make contact with native speakers who taught at their school. Suppositions propagated by *nihonjinron* literature about the admiration (*akogare*) of Japanese learners toward English native speakers were supported by congruent answers obtained from teachers and students. More than half of the respondents stated that Japanese people generally admire and are respectful toward English native speakers as opposed to mostly "neutral" and "disagree" answers when asked if they admire and are respectful toward Asian native speakers.

In Chapter Two I suggested that Japanese English education is in a state of slow transformation from a grammar-translation approach toward a communication-oriented one. The majority of teachers and students, however, did not confirm that English textbooks used at school had already adopted a communicative orientation. They also did not perceive that introducing English at the elementary school level was an effective way of improving English language education in Japan. Additionally, the *Taishukan* survey outcome showed that the largest part of respondents considered early stage English education as problematical. In 1987, the Ministry of Education introduced the JET program and Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) into language classrooms in Japan. The answers to the questionnaires showed that a large number of participants (20 people) had had a chance to work and study with ALTs. Given the fact that the teachers and students came from different, sometimes rural parts of Japan and worked and studied in schools of various sizes, this result may show how widely popular the JET program has become since 1987, reaching various schools and a large number of students all over the country.

When I asked the participants to assess their English language ability, a significant number of them stated that English is a difficult language to learn. All the teachers and the majority of students agreed that Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering listening comprehension, English pronunciation and conversation. Additionally, most students assessed their English knowledge after

six years of studying as beginners' level for speaking and comprehension, and as intermediate level for reading and writing.

Although the survey sample was small, the results of the questionnaire supported my assumptions of the deeply rooted institutional, cultural and ideological issues in the existing English language educational system at Japanese junior and senior high schools. The majority of the participants was unsatisfied with the process of foreign language education in their country and shared the opinion that it needs to be reformed. The results of the teachers' questionnaire were for the most part congruent with the results of the students' poll. Both of them generally reflected the opinions presented by a wider spectrum of the Japanese society in the *Taishukan* survey. Although Japan has embarked on the path of educational reforms, their pace is slow and rigid institutional and cultural standards present in Japanese society continue to shape the outcome of the foreign language instruction, attitudes and views of the teachers and students.

Chapter Five

Conclusions

At this moment in time, Japanese foreign language education is experiencing a major and most fundamental turning point. Consequently, the decisions about its future course will lay the foundation for the upcoming, twenty-first century foreign language educational policy in Japan. Throughout 1980s, the ideology of *kokusaika* (国際化, internationalization), although emphasizing the importance of Japanese cultural identity, persuasively promoted accommodation to English, some attendant Western ways of thinking, and learning of English as a means of communication. Since its emergence and throughout the last twenty years, *kokusaika* ideology has been an inspiration and formed the ground for most of the educational reforms in Japan. Since the establishment of the National Council for Educational Reform in 1984, the Japanese Ministry of Education has repeatedly acknowledged failing with English language education and has not surprisingly proposed considerable changes and revisions. The Ministry acknowledged openly that the existing English language education is ineffective and that the communication-centered approach should be the ultimate goal of future English teaching aiming at producing Japanese who are able to speak English before reaching adulthood (*Eigo shidō hōhō,* 2001: 31). Presupposing that every Japanese student has the ability to become competent in a foreign language, and analyzing all the history and eminence placed on English education in Japan it is truly

attention grabbing that Japanese officials are still thinking of it as unsuccessful. More to the point, my interviews verified that teachers and students generally do not assess highly their English language ability, perceive English language education as unsuccessful, and understand and support the inevitability of reforms.

This thesis tried to weigh several factors that may have contributed to this state of affairs. Namely, I called attention to certain institutional, cultural and ideological aspects that unquestionably influence present English teaching and learning strategies and affect the reforms implementation within the foreign language education methods. The interlocking nature of these aspects means that proposed changes in one area of the system demand changes in other parts as well. By way of illustration, the Ministry of Education remains a powerful and conservative influence, which controls the socialization process of Japanese children. Centralized control of the textbooks and purpose of the educational process, which remains moral and character development, encourages adherence to traditional teaching methods and backs the rigid entrance examination system. The classroom environment and teacher-student communication strategies are permeated with behavioral and interactional patterns that are deeply rooted in Japanese culture. These factors further produce teachers with insufficient linguistic competencies who are not prepared to introduce planned reforms of the curriculum. The presence of these factors was confirmed in my questionnaires since almost all respondents pointed out that their English classes were teacher-centered, grammar-translation oriented and also stated that Japanese English teachers need to improve

their foreign language skills. Furthermore, the majority of my respondents agreed that English language lessons should be compulsory at schools, but less than half of teachers and students thought that all Japanese should be able to communicate in it. This outcome is congruent with the responses to the *Taishukan* poll. Thus both Japanese teachers and students perceive English as an obligatory component of the curriculum necessary in the highly competitive, entrance examination oriented education, but less than half of them think of it as a necessary means of communication that all Japanese should acquire.

Since the institutional control and culturally based study habits described in this thesis are deeply rooted in Japan, a frontal attack on them to launch the reforms would be pointless. The Ministry of Education, therefore, has been acting at its own unhurried pace, gradually encouraging the introduction of teaching and learning reforms in the curriculum through the last twenty years. The introduction and expansion of the JET program, overseas training programs for English teachers, the introduction of the listening component into the university entrance examination and, finally, the establishment of a period of integrated studies at the elementary level all serve to enhance and further develop English language education at Japanese schools. The slow pace of reforms can be explained by the significant difficulties in the cross-cultural exportation of educational innovations like communicative language teaching, which can cause a potential mismatch between the planned strategy and actual teaching and learning practices in Japanese high schools. Transference of such educational improvements must take into

consideration Japan's macro-level features, such as institutional structure of foreign language education, historical background, Japanese cultural traits and ideologies as well as consequential micro-level characteristics visible in classroom practices and interactions between teachers and students. Classroom practices include predominant use of Japanese language to teach English content (namely, grammar and translation of texts) while much less attention is paid to conversational dimensions of language. Student-teacher relations are hierarchical with minimal interaction and spontaneous exchange of opinions. The presence of these characteristics was supported in the answers to my questionnaires.

Another excellent example of the potential mismatch between planned curriculum reforms and present teaching and learning practices in Japanese high schools are Assistant Language Teachers who come to Japan sponsored by the JET program. According to McConnell (2000), who interviewed JET participants teaching at Japanese high schools, they generally perceived their task as building relationships, enhancing mutual communication and understanding between people. Japanese officials and teachers, however, held quite divergent views of the goals of English language education. They understood the program more in terms of helping Japanese students to develop a communication technique that would work between them and the outside culture, which in their opinion, would be always basically different. Additionally, Japanese dual aspects of self and the division inherent in *uchi* and *soto* relationships meant that a Western teacher was at all times viewed as an out-group member and treated like a guest, which neutralized part of the

beneficial results that the JET program could have produced. The results of my pilot survey showed that the views about effective usage of the ALTs in the English classroom varied considerably between interviewed Japanese teachers and students. Most of Japanese teachers stated that ALTs had influence on the practised methods of teaching English in their classroom while most of Japanese students did not perceive the ALTs as being active participants in the language classroom.

Although the foreign experts' and native English teachers' help is very desirable and important, only Japanese professionals working in their own institutional, historical and cultural context may effectively address these issues and construct communication-oriented curricula suitable for Japanese educational circumstances. Because of the strong institutional and cultural context, some of the features of communication-oriented teaching and learning methods may and probably will be very challenging to employ. However, the review of the results of this transition process and assessment of the outcomes will not be possible soon. Time is needed to involve progressively more teachers in the reeducation process and to achieve a gradual change of their classroom practices and their attitudes and beliefs about language teaching. In addition, foreigners who work in Japan as English language instructors are an important element of the changing English language education. In order to reduce their culture shock and to help with the exchange of pedagogical experience between them and Japanese teachers, they should in advance get acquainted with Japanese history and culture distinctiveness. Furthermore, a prior analysis and understanding of the institutional and cultural

context of Japanese education may serve foreign teachers to give appropriate help to the local instructors in implementing communicative oriented reforms.

Japanese English language education may be barely at the beginning of the process of far-reaching changes and reforms, but the ongoing expansion and development of the economic relations between Japan and the world, as well as the overwhelming invasion of English in arts, culture and media will undoubtedly push this process forward. Effects of this ongoing globalization process had echoed in students' responses to my questionnaire. Only less than half of them stated that their main reason for studying English was to get prepared for the entrance examination. Among other reasons they listed there were: 1) enthusiasm to become fluent in English, 2) attraction to North American culture and English language, and 3) understanding that knowing English will increase their job opportunities.

Teaching English in Japan has become a major social issue. Under international and domestic pressure it has already stepped on the path of substantial changes, which are meant to lead from the traditional grammar-translation methods to the communication oriented ones. The future shape of English language education and the role that English language will play in the society depends on the continuous dialogue between the Japanese policymakers, society and educators.

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Appendix A
Ethics statement

Research design

My master's thesis research is being conducted at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Alberta and focuses on the problems of English language education in Japan. I am interested in why English language education in Japan does not give the expected successful results and what are the attitudes of Japanese teachers and learners toward English and English language native speakers.

The results obtained through this questionnaire will form a part of my thesis research. This is a pilot survey, which will be distributed to ten Japanese exchange students studying at the University of Alberta. They came here under the patronage of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology's student exchange program (*Monbukagakusho Haken Kokuhi Ryūgaku*). I have already contacted them and obtained their oral consent to participate in my survey. Through the questionnaire I would like to examine the students' opinions and views about the following:

a. failure or success of English language education in Japan
b. factors influencing English language education in Japan
c. factors influencing Japanese English learners' attitude toward native speakers of English language
d. own experience with English language education during their high school career
e. the changes that are to be implemented in English language curricula at Japanese schools

The results from this survey study will help in evaluation and assessment of their opinions about English language education in Japan and will be utilized in my thesis to supplement my research. The results of the study will be made available to the participants upon request.

Ethical considerations
Potential for Harm
There is no potential for harm to the participants.

Confidentiality
As an anonymous survey, no names will be associated with the data collected. The information will be analyzed and stored in my office at the department of East Asian Studies. Any assessment resulting from this questionnaire that will be revealed in my Masters thesis will not identify the participants in any way.

Consent
All participants will be asked to read the research design in order to become familiar with the purpose of my study. They will also be asked to read and sign a consent form (please see Appendix B). They will be assured that their participation is voluntary and they may quit and leave at any time if they decide they do not want to participate. They will also be assured that they are free to withdraw from participation in the questionnaire without any adverse consequences. The consent form also will give my telephone number and e-mail address in case the participants have any additional questions regarding the research or need additional information.

Appendix B
Consent form

Thank you for your participation in my survey. My master's thesis research is being conducted at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Alberta and focuses on the problems of English language education in Japan. I am interested in why English language education in Japan does not give the expected successful results and what are the attitudes of Japanese teachers and learners toward English and English language native speakers.

The results obtained through this questionnaire will form a part of my thesis research. Through my questionnaires I would like to find out your opinions about English language education in Japan. Your responses will form an important part of my study and will help me to answer my research questions. Please be assured that the survey is anonymous and no name will be associated with any of the forms you are asked to complete, and no individual information will be identified in any way for conference presentations or publications resulting from this study.

You may answer this questionnaire in your free time. However, please be advised to work on it alone and DO NOT consult responses with your colleagues. I would appreciate it if you return the completed questionnaires to me within 3 days. If you have any further comments or concerns about the content of study and the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact and ask me. Please read carefully the consent form attached below and sign it if you agree to participate in the survey.

****

CONSENT FORM

Please be assured that your participation is voluntary and you do not have to participate in this survey if you do not want to. If you decide you do not want to participate you may quit at any time. If you have any further questions or concerns regarding the survey and this research, please contact the principal researcher.

Jolanta Rudzinska, 413C Arts, University of Alberta, tel: (780) 492-4113,
e-mail: jrudzinska@yahoo.com

I have read and understood the consent form and I agree to its terms:

- I can withdraw from the research at any time without any penalty and consequences
- The researcher has the right to end the study ay any time if appropriate
- All information will be treated confidentially and discussed only with the researcher's advisors Dr. Pamela Asquith and Dr. Olenka Bilash
- Any information that identifies me will be destroyed upon completion of this research
- I will not be identifiable in any documents resulting from this research
- I also understand that the results of this research will be used only in the following: research thesis, presentation of written articles

_____ _____ _____

Signature Name Date

In case I need a follow-up questionnaire and you would be willing to participate in my further study, write below the information where I can reach you:

e-mail_____telephone number_____

Appendix C
Questionnaire for Japanese teachers

Professional information

1. How long have you been teaching English?
   _____ years _____ months
2. What grades do you teach?
   a. junior high school, grades_____
   b. senior high school, grades_____
3. How many students do you usually have in your class? _____
4. How many students are there in your school? _____

For questions 5 – 34, please indicate your responses by circling the letters a – e.
Attitude toward English language education

5. It is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
6. English should be a compulsory subject at Japanese schools
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
7. Your students are willing to study English language
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
8. Your students are willing to make contact with the native speakers of English who teach at Japanese schools
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
9. Japanese people are generally respectful toward English native speakers
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
10. Japanese people generally admire English native speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
11. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with English native speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
12. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other European native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
13. Japanese people generally admire other European native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
14. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other European native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
15. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other Asian native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
16. Japanese people generally admire other Asian native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
17. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other Asian native language speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
18. It is necessary for a Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of an English speaking country
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
19. Have you ever worked with an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) in your classroom?
    a. yes **b.** no
20. The ALTs have influence on the practiced English language curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

21. It is necessary for an ALT to be familiar with Japanese culture
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
22. Private English language conversation schools are helpful in improving English conversational ability
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Linguistic questions

23. English is a very difficult language to learn for a Japanese
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
24. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering the following English language skills:
    1) Grammar **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    2) Writing **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    3) Listening comprehension **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    4) Pronunciation **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    5) Conversation **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Your experience in English learning

25. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in high school
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
26. My English language teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Questions about English education reforms

27. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan can be characterized as grammar-translation oriented
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
28. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan are not successful or effective
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
29. New English language curriculum (that is to be introduced from 2002) addresses the need to improve communicative skills of students
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
30. There are already many changes introduced in current English textbooks to support the development of communication skills
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
31. Current English textbooks introduce the racial variety of native speakers
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
32. Japanese English language teachers generally need to improve their language skills
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
33. It is necessary to introduce English language lessons at the elementary schools in Japan
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
34. Establishment of new communication oriented English curricula at Japanese schools will be very difficult
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
35. Do you have any further comments about the current English language curriculum practiced at Japanese schools (you may answer in Japanese)
36. Do you have any further comments about the new English language curriculum proposed by *Monbukagakushō* (you may answer in Japanese)
37. Please feel free to add explanations to any of your responses (you may answer in Japanese)

Appendix D
Results of the Questionnaire for Japanese Teachers

Professional Information

1. How long have you been teaching ?	2 months - 18 years and 8 months (span)
2. What grades do you teach ?	elementary 1st - senior high school 3rd (span)
3. How many students do you usually have in your class ?	2 - 40 students (span)
4. How many students are there in your school ?	18 - 1200 students (span)

Attitude toward English language education	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
5. It is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English	1	3	4	3	2
6. English should be a compulsory subject at Japanese schools	2	6	1	2	2
7. Your students are willing to study English language	1	6	5	1	0
8. Your students are willing to make contact with English native speakers who teach at Japanese schools	5	4	3	0	0
9. Japanese people are generally respectful toward English native speakers	1	11	0	1	0
10. Japanese people generally admire English native speakers	0	9	3	1	0
11. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with English native speakers	2	4	5	2	0
12. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other European native language speakers	0	7	5	1	0
13. Japanese people generally admire other European native language speakers	0	6	6	1	0
14. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other European native language speakers	1	5	5	2	0
15. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other Asian native language speakers	0	3	7	3	0
16. Japanese people generally admire other Asian native language speakers	0	1	7	5	0
17. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other Asian native language speakers	0	4	6	3	0
18. It is necessary for Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of an English speaking country	10	3	0	0	0
19. Have you ever worked with an ALT in your classroom?	yes - 12	no - 1			
20. The ALTs have influence on practiced English lang. curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom	5	4	4	0	0
21. It is necessary for an ALT to be familiar with Japanese culture	3	8	1	1	0
22. Private English language conversation schools are helpful in improving English conversational ability	3	6	4	0	0

Appendix D
Results of the Questionnaire for Japanese Teachers

Linguistic questions	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly agree
23. English is a very difficult language to learn for a Japanese	5	6	2	0	0
24-1. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering English grammar	2	5	3	3	0
24-2. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering English writing	5	6	1	1	0
24-3. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering English listening comprehension	8	5	0	0	0
24-4. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering English pronunciation	8	5	0	0	0
24-5. Japanese learners have difficulties in mastering English conversation	8	5	0	0	0
Your experience in learning English					
25. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in high school	0	0	0	7	6
26. My English language teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson	0	0	2	5	6
Questions about English education reforms					
27. English teaching methods currently practiced in Japan can be characterized as gramm.-transl. oriented	3	5	3	2	0
28. English teaching methods currently practiced in Japan are not successful and effective	0	8	3	2	0
29. New English language curriculum addresses the need to improve communication skills of students	3	4	5	1	0
30. There are already changes introduced in current English textbook to support the develop.of comm. skills	0	6	5	2	0
31. Current English textbooks introduce the racial variety of native speakers	1	4	5	3	0
32. Japanese English language teachers generally need to improve their language skills	8	4	0	0	0
33. It is necessary to introduce English language lessons at elementary schools in Japan	3	4	5	1	0
34. Establishment of new communic. oriented Engl. curricula at Japanese schools will be very difficult	2	5	5	1	0

Appendix E
Questionnaire for Japanese students

Personal information

1. How old are you? _____(Male / Female)
2. How many years in total have you been studying English? _____
3. What years did you attend junior high school: 19 - 19 ?
4. What years did you attend senior high school? 19 - 19 ?
5. How long have you been an exchange student in Canada? _____

For the following questions, please indicate your responses by circling the letters or numbers.
Attitude toward English language and education

6. It is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English.
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
7. English should be a compulsory subject at Japanese schools.
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
8. As a junior high school student I was willing to study English language.
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
9. As a senior high school student I was willing to study English language.
   a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
10. As a junior high school student I was willing to make contact with native English speakers (those who taught at Japanese schools or those whom I met outside the school).
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
11. As a senior high school student I was willing to make contact with native English speakers (those who taught at Japanese schools or those whom I met outside the school).
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
12. Japanese people are generally respectful toward English native speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
13. Japanese people generally admire English native speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
14. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with English native speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
15. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other European native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
16. Japanese people generally admire other European native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
17. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other European native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
18. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other Asian native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
19. Japanese people generally admire other Asian native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
20. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other Asian native language speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
21. Is it necessary for a Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of an English speaking country.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

22. It would be helpful for a Japanese student to have an English "language experience" abroad in English speaking country.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    Please explain why you answered as you did.
    _____

23. Have you ever studied with an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) in your classroom?
    a. yes **b.** no
24. The ALTs had influence on the practised English language curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
25. It is necessary for an ALT to be familiar with Japanese culture.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
26. Private English language conversation schools are helpful in improving English conversational ability.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Linguistic questions

27. English is a very difficult language to learn for a Japanese.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
28. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering the following English language skills:
    1) Grammar **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    2) Writing **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    3) Listening comprehension **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    4) Pronunciation **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
    5) Conversation **a.** strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Your experience in English learning

29. How many students were there usually in your junior and senior high school English classrooms?
    1. junior high school_____
    2. senior high school_____
30. How many students were there approximately in total in your junior and senior high schools?
    1. junior high school_____
    2. senior high school_____
31. I had _____ hours of English language instruction each week in junior high school.
32. I had _____ hours of English language instruction each week in senior high school.
33. I did approximately _____ hours of English language homework each week in junior high school.
34. I did approximately _____ hours of English language homework each week in senior high school.
35. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in junior high school.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
36. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in senior high school.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

37. My junior high school English teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
38. My senior high school English teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
39. To acquire an English language speaking ability it is necessary to go to a private English language conversation school.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
40. To acquire an English language speaking ability it is necessary to take private English language lessons with a native speaker.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
41. During my English lessons in junior and senior high school most attention was paid to the learning of grammar rules and item-by-item vocabulary.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
42. Spontaneous answers and participation in the language classroom by students were extremely rare.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
43. Students in my English language classroom took part in the selection of the teaching materials used by my English teacher.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
44. Students in my English language classroom took part in the selection of the assessment procedures used by my English teacher.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
45. My main reason for studying English in senior high school was to get prepared for the entrance examination to the university.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
46. My main reason for studying English at senior high school was (circle all that apply to you)
    a. I liked North American culture
    b. I wanted to learn English
    c. I liked English language
    d. I knew that knowing English will increase your job opportunities
    e. Other (please specify)_____
47. After graduating from the English program in senior high school I was able to:
    f. Understand spoken English on **a.** beginner level **b.** intermediate level **c.** advanced level **d.** I was fluent
    g. Understand written English on **a.** beginner level **b.** intermediate level **c.** advanced level **d.** I was fluent
    h. Write English on **a.** beginner level **b.** intermediate level **c.** advanced level **d.** I was fluent
    i. Speak (communicate) in English on **a.** beginner level **b.** intermediate level **c.** advanced level **d.** I was fluent
48. English textbooks that I used in junior and senior high school included activities to support the development of communication skills.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
49. English textbooks that I used in junior and senior high school introduced the racial variety of native speakers.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

50. English textbooks that I used in junior and senior high school included activities to support the development of cultural knowledge.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree

Questions about present state of English education and English education reforms

51. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan can be characterized as grammar-translation oriented
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
52. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan can be characterized as communicative in orientation.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
53. Activities in English language classes in junior high school give students many opportunities to use English.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
54. Activities in English language classes in senior high school give students many opportunities to use English.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
55. English language classes in junior high school can be characterized as teacher-centered.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
56. English language classes in senior high school can be characterized as teacher-centered
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
57. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan are successful.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
58. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan are effective.
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
59. Could you explain the reasons for your answers to question 57 and 58 in few words (you may answer in Japanese)

    _____

    _____

60. English teaching methods currently practised in Japan need to be reformed
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
61. Are you aware of the New English language curriculum that is to be introduced in Japan from 2002?
    a. yes **b.** no
62. (If you answered 'yes' to question 61) New English language curriculum (that is to be introduced from 2002) addresses the need to improve communicative skills of students
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
63. Japanese English language teachers generally need to improve their language skills
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
64. It is necessary to introduce English language lessons at the elementary schools in Japan
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
65. Establishment of new communication-oriented English curricula at Japanese schools will be difficult
    a. strongly agree **b.** agree **c.** neutral **d.** disagree **e.** strongly disagree
66. Could you explain the reasons for your answer to question 65 in a few words (you may answer in Japanese)

    _____

    _____

67. Do you have any further comments about the English language curriculum you followed in junior and senior high school (you may answer in Japanese)

68. Do you have any comments about the new English language curriculum (see the next page) proposed by *Monbukagakusho* (you may answer in Japanese)

69. Please feel free to add explanations to any of your responses (you may answer in Japanese)

Appendix F
Results of the Questionnaire for Japanese Students

Personal information

1. How old are you ?	19 - 33 years old (span)
2. How many years in total have you been studying English ?	7 - 19 years of experience (span)
3. What years did you attend junior high school ?	1981 - 1998 (span)
4. What years did you attend senior high school ?	1984 - 2001 (span)
5. How long have you been an exchange student in Canada ?	4 months - 4 years (span)

Attitude toward English language and education

	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
6. It is necessary for all Japanese to be able to communicate in English	1	5	2	3	2
7. English should be a compulsory subject at Japanese schools	2	8	2	1	0
8. As a junior high school student I was willing to study English language	6	4	1	1	1
9. As a senior high school student I was willing to study English language	3	6	3	0	1
10. As a junior high school student I was willing to make contact with English native speakers	1	4	3	2	2
11. As a senior high school student I was willing to make contact with English native speakers	3	4	2	1	2
12. Japanese people are generally respectful toward English native speakers	2	4	6	1	0
13. Japanese people generally admire English native speakers	2	5	3	2	1
14. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with English native speakers	2	5	5	1	0
15. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other European native language speakers	1	3	6	3	0
16. Japanese people generally admire other European native language speakers	0	6	4	3	0
17. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other European native language speakers	0	5	5	1	1
18. Japanese people are generally respectful toward other Asian native language speakers	0	1	4	8	0
19. Japanese people generally admire other Asian native language speakers	0	1	3	6	3
20. Japanese people are generally reluctant to speak with other Asian native language speakers	0	2	6	3	1
21. It is necessary for a Japanese English teacher to experience the culture of English speaking country	7	3	3	0	0
22. It would be helpful for a Jpnese student to have Engl. lang. experience abroad in Engl. speaking country	7	4	0	1	1
23. Have you ever studied with an ALT in your classroom ?	yes - 8	no - 5			
24. The ALTs had influence on the practiced Engl. lang. curriculum and teaching methods in the classroom	0	4	4	1	1
25. It is necessary for an ALT to be familiar with Japanese culture	3	4	2	0	1
26. Private Engl. language conversation schools are helpful in improving Engl. converstaional ability	3	4	4	1	1

Appendix F
Results of the Questionnaire for Japanese Students

Linguistic questions	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
27. English is a very difficult language to learn for a Japanese	2	6	2	3	0
28-1. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering grammar	0	4	5	3	1
28-2. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering writing	4	2	3	3	1
28-3. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering listening comprehension	3	9	1	0	0
28-4. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering pronunciation	6	4	0	2	1
28-5. As a Japanese learner of English I had difficulties in mastering conversation	6	4	1	2	0

Your experience in English learning

29. How many students were there usually in your junior and senior high school English classrooms ?	junior 25 - 40 students			senior 30 - 40 students	
30. How many students were there approximately in total in your junior and senior high schools ?	junior 160 - 960 students			senior 320 - 1500 students	
31. I had------hours of English language instruction each week in junior high school	2 - 5 hours				
32. I had------hours of English language instruction each week in senior high school	3 - 8 hours				
33. I did approximately------hours of English language homework each week in junior high school	1 - 6 hours				
34. I did approximately------hours of English language homework each week in senior high school	1 - 10 hours				
35. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in junior high school	0	2	1	6	4
36. I used practically or spoke English during my English lessons in senior high school	1	1	2	3	6
37. My junior high school English teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson	0	3	2	6	2
38. My senior high school English teacher spoke and used English in the classroom during the lesson	0	3	3	5	2
39. To acquire an Engl.lang.speaking ability it is necessary to go to a private Engl.lang.conversat.school	1	4	4	4	0
40. To acquire an Engl.lang.speaking ability it is necessary to take private Engl.lang.lessons with nat.sp.	4	3	5	0	1
41. During my Engl.less.in high school most attention was paid to learning of gram.and item-by-item vocab.	6	6	1	0	0
42. Spontaneous answers and participation in the language classroom by students were extremely rare	2	7	3	1	0
43. Students in my Engl.lang.class.took part in the selection of the teaching material used by Engl.teacher	0	2	3	4	4
44. Stud.in my Engl.lang.class.took part in the selection of the assessment procedures used by Engl.teach.	0	2	3	4	4
45. My main reason for studying Engl.in sen.high sch.was to get prepared for entrance exam to university	3	2	4	4	0
46-a. My main reason for studying English in senior high school was that I liked North American culture	3 people				
46-b. My main reason for studying English in senior high school was that I wanted to learn English	5 people				
46-c. My main reason for studying English in senior high school was that I liked English language	4 people				
46-d. My main reason for stud. Engl. in sen. high sch. was I knew that Engl. will increase my job opportun.	4 people				

Appendix F
Results of the Questionnaire for Japanese Students

Your experience in English learning (cont.)	level			
	beginner	intermed.	advanced	fluent
47-f. After graduating from Engl. program in sen. high sch. I was able to understand spoken English on	8	3	2	0
47-g. After graduating from Engl. program in sen. high sch. I was able to understand written English on	4	8	1	0
47-h. After graduating from Engl. program in sen. high sch. I was able to write English on	4	9	0	0
47-i. After graduating from Engl. program in sen. high sch. I was able to speak (communicate) in Engl. on	10	2	1	0

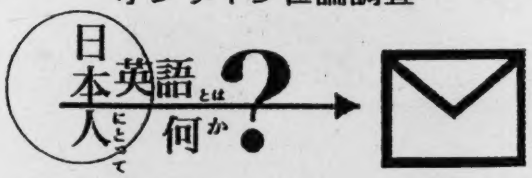
	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
48. English textbooks I used in jun. and sen.h.sch. included activities to support developm.of commun.skills	0	1	1	7	4
49. English textbooks I used in jun.and sen.h.sch. introduced the racial variety of native speakers	0	2	4	4	3
50. English textb. I used in jun.and sen.h.sch. included activities to support developm. of cultural knowledge	0	3	3	6	1

Questions about present state of English education and education reforms

51. Engl. teaching methods currently practiced in Japan can be characterized as gramm.-translat.oriented	3	5	3	0	0
52. Engl. teach.methods currently practiced in Japan can be characterized as communicative in orientat.	1	1	4	4	1
53. Activities in English language classes in jun.high sch. give students many opportunities to use English	1	1	3	5	1
54. Activities in English language classes in sen.high sch. give students many opportunities to use English	0	3	4	2	2
55. English language classes in junior high school can be characterized as teacher-centered	3	6	2	0	0
56. English language classes in senior high school can be characterized as teacher-centered	4	4	2	1	0
57. English teaching methods currently practiced in Japan are successful	0	0	5	4	2
58. English teaching methods currently practiced in Japan are effective	0	0	4	5	2
60. English teaching methods currently practiced in Japan need to be reformed	4	6	1	0	0
61. Are you aware of the new English language curriculum that is to be introduced in Japan from 2002	yes - 1	no - 12			
62. (If you answered "yes" in q. 61) New Engl.lang.curric. addresses the need to improve commun. skills	1	0	0	0	0
63. Japanese English language teachers generally need to improve their language skills	5	5	3	0	0
64. It is necessary to introduce English language lessons at the elementary schools in Japan	3	2	6	2	0

Appendix G
Japanese version of the *Taishukan* questionnaire

http://www.taishukan.co.jp
オンライン世論調査



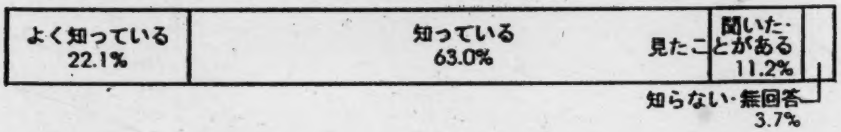
お待たせしました！　世論調査の結果発表です。
アンケートにご協力下さった皆様、ありがとうございました。
シンポジウムを聞いて、このＨＰで見て、あなたの考えはどう変わりましたか？

対象：大修館ホームページ「蕪館」来訪者
実施期間：２００１年１月１日～３月２０日
有効回答数：３５７件

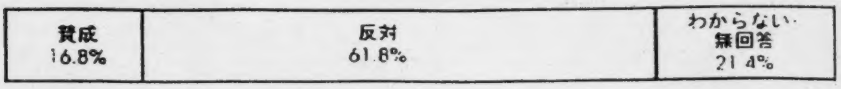
職業：学生=１３６人　小・中・高校教員=８８人　大学教員・研究者=４２人
会社員・公務員=９０人　その他・無回答=１人

年齢：～２２歳=５５人　２３～４０歳=１７６人　４１～６０歳=１０６人
６１歳～=１９人　無回答=１人

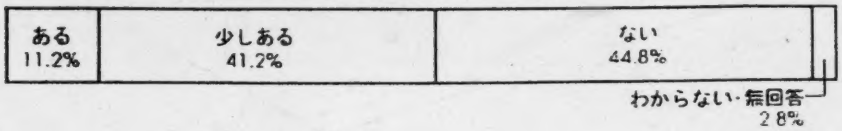
Ｑ１　あなたは、「英語第二公用語論」を知っていますか？



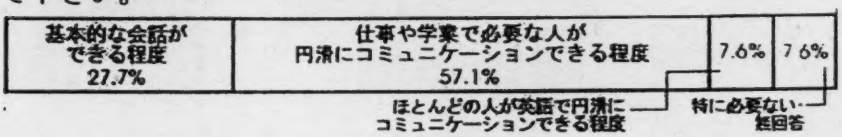
Ｑ２　Ｑ１で「よく知っている」「知っている」と答えた方に質問です。あなたは、英語公用語論に賛成ですか、反対ですか？



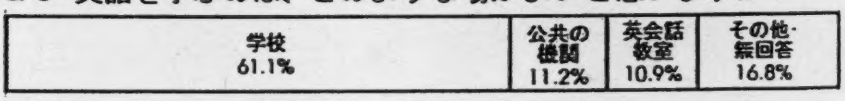
Q３ あなたは英語に苦手意識がありますか？



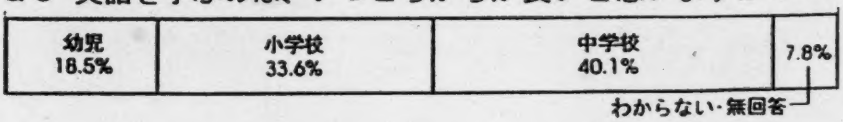
Q４ 今後、日本人は平均してどの程度英語をマスターすべきだと思いますか？　あなたはの考えにもっとも近いものを選んで下さい。



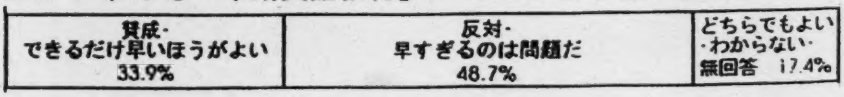
Q５ 英語を学ぶのは、どのような場がよいと思いますか？



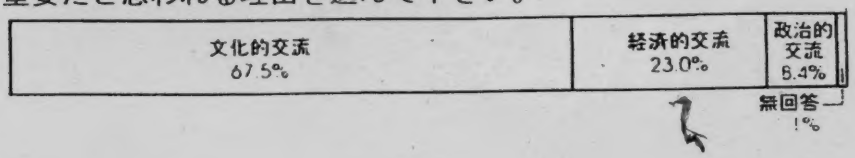
Q６ 英語を学ぶのは、いつごろからが良いと思いますか？



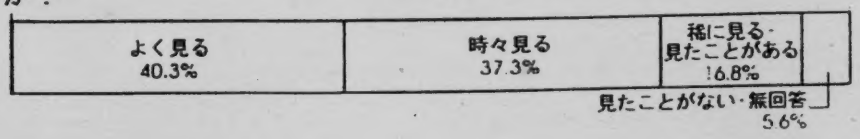
Q７ いわゆる「早期英語教育」についてどう思いますか？



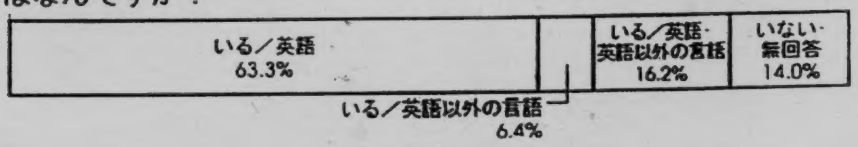
Q８ 英語を学ぶことがなぜ必要なのだと思いますか？　最も重要だと思われる理由を選んで下さい。



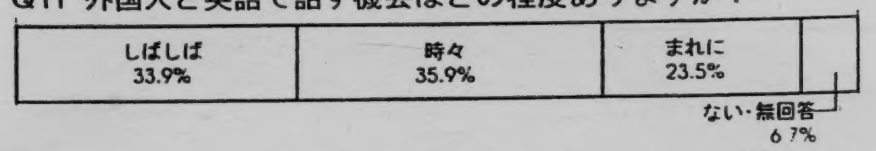
Q９ インターネットで、海外のサイトを見たことがありますか？



Q10 外国人の友人・知人はいますか？／その人との会話言語はなんですか？



Q11 外国人と英語で話す機会はどの程度ありますか？



Appendix H
English version of the *Taishukan* questionnaire

www.taishukan.co.jp/anquette.html
Online questionnaire
Japanese perception of English

Conducted between: January 1st, 2001 – March 20th, 2001
Participants: 357 people
Occupation: students-136 people; elementary, junior and senior high school teachers-88 people; university teachers and researchers-42 people; office workers and public service officials-90 people; others/no reply-1 person
Age: ~ 22 years old-55 people; 23~40 years old-176 people; 41~60 years old-106 people; 61~ years old-19 people; no reply-1 person

1) **Are you familiar with the idea of introducing English as a second official language in Japan?**
   Yes, I know it very well 22. 1%
   Yes, I know it 63. 0%
   Yes, I read and heard about it 11. 2%
   I don't know anything about it/ no reply 3. 7%
2) **Do you agree with or are you against the idea of introducing English as a second official language in Japan?**
   I agree with the idea 16. 8%
   I am against the idea 61. 8%
   I don't know/ no reply 21. 4%
3) **Do you feel that your English competence is low?**
   Yes 11. 2%
   A little 41. 2%
   No 44. 8%
   I don't know/ no reply 2. 8%
4) **Up to what degree should an average Japanese master English language?**
   To be able to conduct a basic conversation 27. 7%
   To be able to communicate smoothly when their work or research requires 57. 1%
   Almost all people should be able to communicate smoothly 7. 6%
   Not necessary/no reply 7. 6%
5) **Where is the best place to learn English?**
   School 61. 1%
   Public facility 11. 2%
   English conversation school 10. 9%
   Others/ no reply 16. 8%

6) **When should we start learning English?**
   From kindergarten 18. 5%
   From elementary school 33. 6%
   From junior high school 40. 1%
   I don't know/ no reply 7. 8%
7) **What do you think about the so-called "Early Stage English Education"?**
   I agree with it and think that the sooner the better 33. 9%
   I do not agree with it, starting too soon is a problem 48. 7%
   Either way is good / I don't know/ no reply 17. 4%
8) **Why do you think it is necessary to learn English? Choose the most important reason.**
   For the cultural exchange 67. 5%
   For economical exchange 23. 0%
   For government exchange 8. 45%
   No reply 1. 1%
9) **Have you ever visited foreign sites on the Internet?**
   I visit them very often 40. 3%
   I visit them from time to time 37. 3%
   I visit them rarely 16. 8%
   I have never visited them/ no reply 5. 6%
10) **Do you have a foreign friend? In what language do you speak with him?**
   I do/ English 63. 3%
   I do/ other languages than English 6. 4%
   I do/ English and other languages than English 16. 2%
   I don't/ no reply 14. 0%
11) **How often do you have the opportunity to speak English with a foreigner?**
   Quite frequently 33. 9%
   From time to time 35. 9%
   Rarely 23. 5%
   Not at all/ no reply 6. 7%

Appendix I
Japanese version of the Greeting of the
Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
at the meeting regarding the improvement of English language curriculum
January 26th, 2000

英語指導方法等改善の推進に関する懇談会　文部大臣挨拶
期　日　平成１２年１月２６日

１．本日は、お忙しい中を早朝からお集まりいただき、有難うございます。また、このたびは、「英語指導方法等改善の推進に関する懇談会」の委員に御就任をお願いしましたところ、快くお引き受けいただき、厚く御礼を申し上げます。

２．さて、新しいミレニアムを迎え、我が国及び世界の経済・社会は一段と国際化が進展しております。今後、国際社会における人的・物的交流はますます深まっていくと思われ、これからの子供たちに、今や事実上の国際共通語となっている、英語によるコミュニケーション能力の育成を図ることは大変重要であると考えます。

３．このような状況の中で、新しい学習指導要領では、中学校及び高等学校の英語教育について、基礎的・実践的コミュニケーション能力の育成を一層重視するとともに、小学校については、新設される「総合的な学習の時間」において英会話学習を行うことができるようにいたしました。

４．しかし、このような新しい学習指導要領の趣旨を推進するためには、英語教育について、これまでの指導方法のままでよいのか、十分検討を行う必要があります。

５．我が国国民の国民性や、地理的・歴史的状況、言語環境等を踏まえ、児童・生徒の発達段階にふさわしい英語教育の在り方について、より適切な、より効果的な、指導方法を工夫すべきであると考えます。

また、現在、学校教育において英語教育に多大な時間を費やしながら、必ずしもこれに見合った実力が育成されていないのではないかという御指摘もあります。

こうした御意見に真摯に対応するためにも、私は、この「英語指導方法等改善の推進に関する懇談会」を発足させることとした次第です。

6．したがって、この懇談会では、まず、英語によるコミュニケーション能力がしっかりと児童・生徒に身に付くような指導方法について、御検討をお願いしたいと存じます。

7．また、併せて、英語担当教員の選考方法や研修、高校入試や大学入試の在り方、ＡＬＴ（外国語指導助手）の活用方法などについても御意見をいただきますとともに、日常生活で英語を聞き話す機会を大いに提供するための方策についても御検討をお願いしたいと存じます。

8．そのほか、改善すべき点がございましたら、できるだけ幅広く御意見をいただきたいと存じます。

9．文部省といたしましては、この懇談会における検討結果を行政施策に反映させ、児童・生徒が英語によるコミュニケーション能力を身に付けられるよう努力して参りたいと考えております。そして近い将来、すべての国民が社会人になるまでに英語を使いこなせるようになることを心から念願する次第です。

10．検討の期間としては、１年以内のできるだけ早い時期に結論を得たいと考えておりますので、委員各位におかれましては、お忙しいところ恐縮に存じますが、何卒、格別の御協力を賜りますようお願い申し上げまして私の挨拶といたします。